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GOD AND THE THEOLOGIANS

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On Revolutions

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A Month in Summer

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John Strachey

Richard Hughes
Faulkner and Bennett

V. S. Naipaul
Cricket

Walter Allen
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edited by
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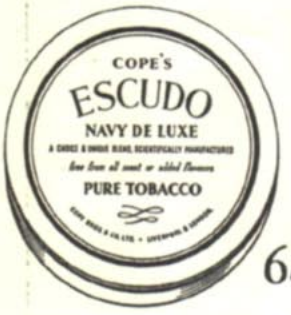

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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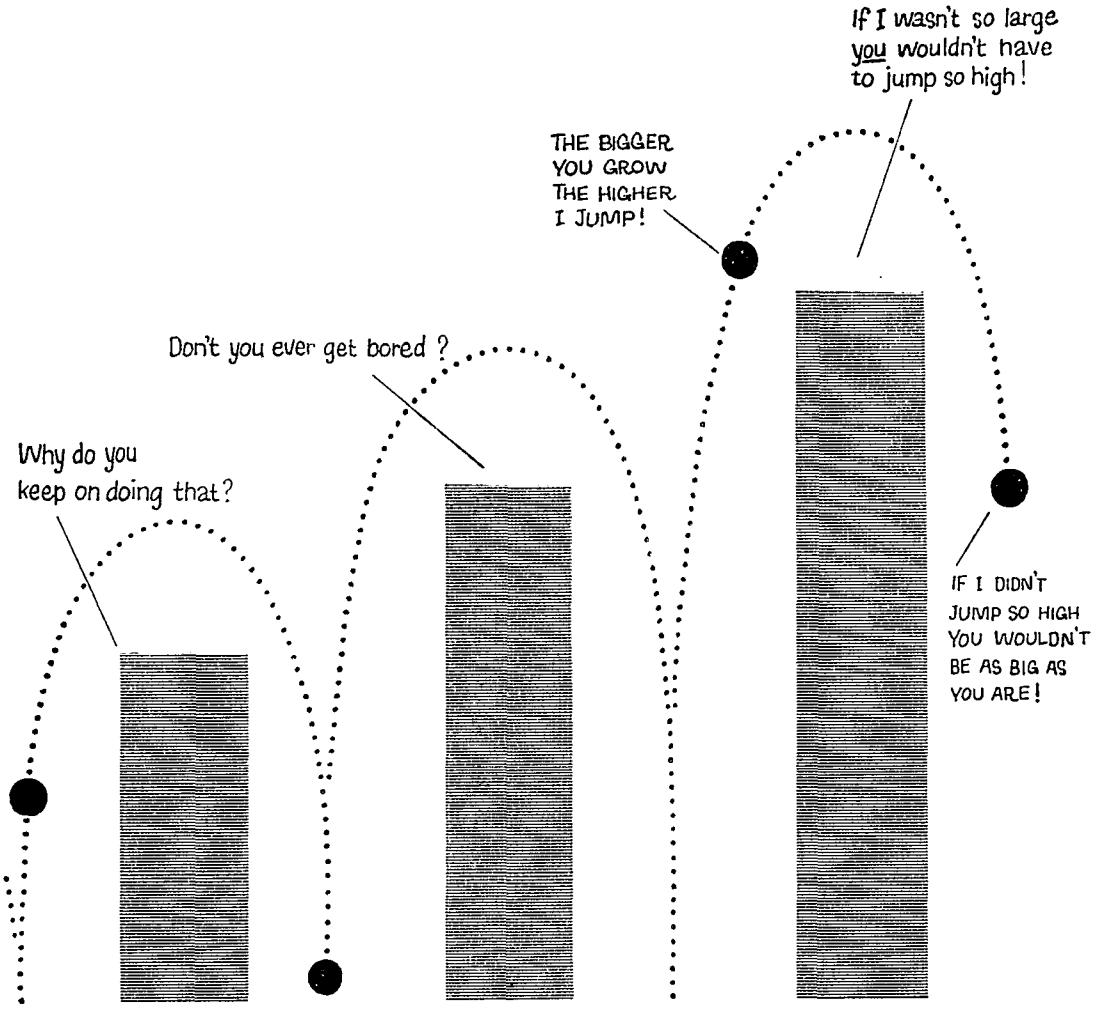
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Alasdair MacIntyre

God and the Theologians

BISHOPS provide news items under three kinds of headline: they comment on our Morals, they forward schemes of Church Reunion, and—much less often—they discuss Christianity in public. The reported comments of the Bishop of Peterborough as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury on the book *Honest to God*[1] make it clear that the charge against the Bishop of Woolwich is largely that his utterances were public and that the first of them was an article in the Sunday *Observer*. To the discussion of speculative theological issues between consenting adults in private the Archbishop obviously would have less objection.

The reactions of his episcopal colleagues however provide only one indication of the importance of what Dr. Robinson said in *Honest to God*. The real interest among large numbers of people usually deeply inarticulate about religion is even more significant. More than one kind of raw nerve was touched by Dr. Robinson's theme. For he drew our attention to the fact that although the death of God has been announced over and over again in our culture, it remains true that God is an unconscionable time a-dying. I do not refer by this to the staying power of ecclesiastical institutions; they probably contribute to the strengthening of atheism as much as they ever did. But the survival of religious modes of feeling and questioning at widely different levels in our culture points clearly to something that Nietzsche and Feuerbach missed.

TO PUT WHAT Dr. Robinson wrote into perspective it is worth recalling that atheism is not all of one kind. Like Christianity it has its rival traditions. There is the speculative atheism which is concerned to deny that over and above the universe there is something else, an invisible intelligent being who exists apart from the world and rules over it. Such an atheism is concerned to point out fallacies in the arguments for the existence of such a being, to stress the fact that we have no need of this hypothesis; and in general to expose religion as a series of intellectual mistakes. Its patron saints are David Hume and Bertrand Russell. In so far as it seeks to explain religion it tends to lay stress on the general folly and weakness of human beings; its panacea is usually education, and its grief is that increased education by no means always produces increased scepticism about Christianity.

It is at just this point that a quite different kind of atheism intervenes to enquire why we should ever have expected otherwise. Since argument is not what fathers religious beliefs in the first place, why should learning the difference between good and bad arguments produce scepticism? Religion is misunderstood if it is construed simply as a set of intellectual errors; it is rather the case that in a profoundly misleading form deep insights, hopes and fears are being expressed. We have to remove the mask of supernaturalist error—to this extent this second tradition presupposes the first. But to do so will be to expose a set of misunderstood truths. Religion needs to be translated into non-religious terms and not simply rejected. This is the atheism of Feuerbach, of David Friedrich Strauss and of the young Karl Marx. Its task is not a purely intellectual one; it is rather to transform society so that men will no longer need to resort to religious forms of expression. When the hopes which men have are embodied in secular social forms they will no longer need to appear in disguise as portraits of another and supernatural realm.

[1] Dr. John Robinson, the Bishop of Woolwich. *Honest to God*. SCM Press, 5s.

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WHAT IS STRIKING about Dr. Robinson's book is first and foremost that he is an atheist in *both* senses. He devotes a good deal of his space to attacking the notion of a being "out there." He quotes Bonhoeffer as saying that "Man has learned to cope with all questions of importance without recourse to God as a working hypothesis. . . ." But not only this: he is prepared to translate theological statements into non-theological. He says that what we mean when we speak of God is "that which concerns us ultimately"; that to speak of God is to speak of the deepest things we experience. "Belief in God is a matter of 'what you take seriously without any reservation'", and to assert that God is love is to assert the supremacy of personal relationships. All theological statements can consequently be translated into statements about human concern.

Dr. Robinson explicitly contrasts his view with what he calls "supernaturalism" and with what he calls "religion." Yet, even although he is prepared to assert with Feuerbach that "the true atheist is not the man who denies God, the subject; it is the man for whom the attributes of divinity, such as love, wisdom and justice are nothing", he is unwilling to abandon the word "God" and a great many kindred theological words. Yet I think that we might well be puzzled by this strong desire for a theological vocabulary; for the only reason given for preserving the name "God" is that "our being has depths which naturalism, whether evolutionary, mechanistic, dialectical or humanistic, cannot or will not recognise". But this is to say that all atheists to date have described "our being" inadequately. And that our accounts of human nature are all inadequate, most atheists would concede. But what, according to the Bishop, is at issue is how to describe our nature and not anything else. So the Bishop is fundamentally at one with Hume and Feuerbach, and at odds with Aquinas, Luther, and Billy Graham.

THE SECOND HALF of *Honest to God* reveals that the Bishop is a very conservative atheist. He wants an atheist Christology, he wishes to retain and to revise the notion of worship, and his moral attitudes are in fact intensely conservative. Sex outside marriage turns out to be just as wrong in the eyes of the Bishop, who says we must ask what the demands of love are, as it ever was for any Bishop who asked what ecclesiastical authority said. Indeed the combination of radical intellectual doubt with conservative moralism is intensely reminiscent of *Robert Elsmere* and of the agonies of Victorian clergymen. Only Dr. Robinson scarcely appears in agony; he has a cheerful, even brisk style. And he recognises much less clearly than some of his episcopal critics the implications for traditional Christianity of what he is saying.

But Dr. Robinson is not alone here. The response to his book might suggest that the combination of a religious vocabulary with substantial atheism has a wide appeal. And this is a second reason why *Honest to God* may be important. For the quality of this response may reveal something of the situation of theology in general in our sort of society. Dr. Robinson after all does more than merely quote Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Paul Tillich; he presents his views as the outcome of a revolution in Protestant theology defined by those names.

So that two questions press on us: is Protestant theology, and not merely Dr. Robinson, essentially atheistic now? And what light does such theology throw upon our social life?

MODERN PROTESTANT theology is rooted in catastrophe. The liberal idealism which easily confused a secular faith in uninterrupted progress with belief in the actions of a divine providence could not survive the trenches of World War I. Tillich was an army chaplain, as Bultmann was to be later on. Bonhoeffer was to be executed by the Nazis. The problem of evil had to be more than an academic exercise. Moreover the matter of traditional Protestant preaching with its moralising and its promise of pietistic consolations could scarcely survive. Two questions pressed in: how can we think of God after the Somme, after Auschwitz? And how can we preach to contemporary man?[2]

[2] It is the recurrence of these two questions together which leads Dr. Robinson to write sometimes as if he is concerned with whether and what God is and sometimes as if it is merely a matter of finding conveniently different images to suit different audiences. So he can say that he does not wish to disturb those who find it possible still to think of God in traditional ways. This makes it possible for the Archbishop to present Dr. Robinson as a mildly erroneous and over-enthusiastic champion of some aspects of orthodoxy at the expense of others. But in fact if Dr. Robinson's argument is right, the traditional views of God are not merely outmoded; they are simply false. And in other passages Dr. Robinson recognises this.

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The first answer to these questions was Barth's commentary on *Romans,* where St. Paul's Greek is conjured into a blend of Luther, Calvin, Dostoievsky, and Kierkegaard. (Not so misleading either, for each of them had digested large quantities of St. Paul.) Barth's message is that any attempt to justify belief in God or any attempt to comprehend God's ways by translating revelation into terms other than its own is bound to fail. God is infinitely distant from man and totally other. In revelation he condescends to us: we can only accept or reject, we cannot argue. Evil cannot be explained; but we can be redeemed and saved from its power. At first sight Barth's starting-point in theology is at the opposite pole from that of Dr. Robinson. And certainly as Barthian theology has developed systematically, it has remained a keystone of orthodoxy, by now a major influence among Roman Catholics as well as among Protestants. But Barthian theology nonetheless contains the materials for its own self-transformation. For if the Word of God cannot be identified with *any* frail human attempt to comprehend it, the way is open for sympathy with those who reject human theologies which have attempted to substitute for the Divine Word (and perhaps Barthian theology among them). So Barth has always had an interest in Ludwig Feuerbach. If it is *any* human work or word which we have to carefully avoid identifying or confusing with the divine, then we are in a very different position from that of traditional Protestant pietistic orthodoxy. For none but God can be infallible; and hence no church authority, and not even the scriptures, can be treated as infallible without impiety. This was the basis upon which Barth welcomed radical, scholarly criticism of the New Testament while fundamentalist orthodoxy always rejected it. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

At this point, therefore, Protestant theology has had to face up to its own inadequacies. Dr. Robinson is misleading here, for his mosaic of quotations from Bultmann, Tillich, and Bonhoeffer might suggest too great a likeness between these theologians: whereas what is in fact striking is that from quite different standpoints all these theologians converge upon unbelief. Consider them in turn.

Bultmann's theology[3] has three quite separate elements to it. There is first of all his historical scepticism about the New Testament events. Closely connected with this is his belief that the New Testament message is presented in terms of a pre-scientific cosmology and that consequently the gospel must be "de-mythologised" before it can be preached to scientific man. And there is, thirdly, his view of what the de-mythologised message in fact is. The pre-scientific cosmology is one of a three-tiered universe to which belong notions of a descent into hell, an ascent into heaven, a coming again from the heavens, of angelic and demonic hierarchies and indeed of miraculous powers. This mythology conceals rather than conveys the message that man is a prey to an inauthentic existence, that Jesus summons him to a decision, by which he can face up to his being as that of one who is going to die and so begin to live authentically. What Jesus really meant turns out to have been an anticipation of Martin Heidegger, and when the gospel is de-mythologised a theistic existentialism is what remains.

But is this existentialism more than nominally theistic? Bultmann's pupil Kamlah took the final step of pointing out that what Bultmann takes the life of faith to be makes its possibility logically independent of the occurrence of any event in Palestine in the first century and, indeed, of the existence of a supernatural being. Christianity is secularised by stages into an atheistic philosophy. Bultmann's own retention of some elements of traditional Christian theism appears to have no rational justification within the framework of his own thought.

Tillich's[4] contrast with Bultmann is at first sight sharp. Tillich sees himself as the heir of "the Protestant principle" that no finite being must be confused with the divine. In so far as secularisation has been an insistence that nothing in nature must be identified with God, secularisation is a genuine ally of Protestant Christianity. God is not *a* being, who just happens to exist, an additional individual: in denying the existence of God the atheists are in the right. It is true that in his *Systematic Theology* Tillich slips into ascribing to God predicates which we would normally take to imply

[3] See *Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings,* Rudolf Bultmann (Meridian Books, 1960); *The World and Beyond* (Lutterworth, 27s. 6d.); *The History of Synoptic Tradition* (Basil Blackwell, 63s.).

[4] See *The Courage to Be* (Fontana Books, 1962), *Theology of Culture* (Oxford, 1959), *Dynamics of Faith—World Perspectives* (Allen & Unwin, 9s. 6d.).

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that God was *a* being. God creates and God reveals himself, for example. But he believes that in doing this he is able to rely on his own doctrine of God. This is two-sided. In the first volume of the *Systematic Theology* there is a good deal of traditional metaphysical play with being and not-being. But the rules of play are all governed by an initial criterion whose implications are far more drastic than Tillich realises; theological statements are statements about what ultimately concerns us, and we learn the nature of what ultimately concerns us by "an analysis of the concept 'ultimate concern'...." If the object of theological discourse is our own ultimate concern, what of God? It turns out that "God" just is the name for that concern. We get the transition from ontological assertion to ultimate human concern very clearly stated in a sermon:

> The name of this infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being is God. That depth is what the word God means. And if that word has not much meaning for you, translate it and speak of the depths of your life, of the source of your being, of your ultimate concern, of what you take seriously without any reservation. Perhaps in order to do so you must forget everything traditional that you have learnt about God, perhaps even that word itself. For if you know that God means depth, you know much about him. You cannot then call yourself an atheist or unbeliever. For you cannot think or say: Life has no depth! Life is shallow!

Clearly, however, the conversion of the unbeliever is only so easy for Tillich because belief in God has been evacuated of all its traditional content. It consists now in moral seriousness and nothing more. Even if we were to concede Tillich a verbal triumph over the atheist, the substance of atheism has been conceded. Just as Bultmann's view of the New Testament points towards scepticism, so does Tillich's analysis of the doctrine of God. It seems that Dr. Robinson is not alone as a theological atheist.

BUT WHAT of Dietrich Bonhoeffer? Those who have written of him have usually dwelt on the posthumously collected *Letters and Papers from Prison*[5] at the expense of his earlier books, and more expressly at the expense of *Sanctorum Communio* and *Akt und Sein*. What Bonhoeffer tried to explain was the specific character of a Christian way of life in a Christian community. In *Akt und Sein* he even tries to solve theological problems by showing the role of the concepts in question in the life of the church. And the life of the Christian community in *Sanctorum Communio* is specified in terms of sociological categories borrowed from Ferdinand Tönnies, the familiar categories of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. But Bonhoeffer wishes to show not what Christian societies share with other societies, but precisely what distinguishes Christian from other shared ways of life. He rejects the answer which both some religious apologists and secular sociologists would give: that the specific differentia lies in the performance of certain religious practices or in the status accorded to certain special theistic types of explanation. God is not an hypothesis, or if he is treated as one, then it is an hypothesis which has already been discredited. The Christian way of life consists not in any reliance either on ecclesiastical forms or on divine power but in a life of worldly powerlessness, lived totally for others. So we get the final conclusion in his notes in prison that

> The transcendence consists not in tasks beyond our scope and power, but in the nearest Thou at hand. God in human form, not, as in other religions, in animal form—the monstrous, chaotic, remote and terrifying—nor yet in abstract form—the absolute, metaphysical infinite, etc.—nor yet in the Greek divine-human of autonomous man, but man existing for others, and hence the Crucified....

So the distinction between secular atheistic man and Christian man is that the latter acknowledges his powerlessness in his concern for others. But what would it be like to do this in the world of today, of the welfare state and of the under-developed countries, facing the patterns of world revolution? One gets from Bonhoeffer's writings no clear picture of what type of action he would actually be recommending now in 1963, but one gets the clearest picture of what Bonhoeffer means if one sees it in the context out of which he wrote. For in Nazi Germany, and in the Europe of the 'thirties, the Christian role was at best one of suffering witness. The Nazi regress to gods of race made relevant a Christian regress to a witness of the catacombs and of the martyrs. There was available then a simple form in which to relive Christ's passion. Bonhoeffer lived it. And in all situations where nothing else remains for Christians this remains.

But what has this Christianity to say not of powerlessness, but of the handling of power? Nothing; and hence the oddity of trying to

[5] S.C.M. (1956) 155.

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reissue Bonhoeffer's message in our world. Consider Bonhoeffer's cry from prison:

> Man's religiosity makes him look in his distress to the power of God in the world; he uses God as a *Deus ex machina*. The Bible however directs him to the powerlessness and suffering of God; only a suffering God can help.

Imagine it directed to a church which is providing chaplains for the West German armed forces, as Bonhoeffer's church is, or to a church which chose the right moment to get out of gilt-edged and into equities, as Dr. Robinson's did. Only a suffering God can help?

Bonhoeffer's Christianity is then intelligible only in one sort of context. Outside that context it lacks precisely any specific differentia from the way of life of sensitive generous liberals. It does not issue in atheism as the conclusion of an argument (as Bultmann's theology does), and it does not present atheism in theological language (as Tillich's theology does), but it fails in the task for which it was designed and in our sort of society it becomes a form of practical atheism, for it clothes ordinary liberal forms of life with the romantic unreality of a catacombic vocabulary.

We can see the harsh dilemma of a would-be contemporary theology. The theologians begin from orthodoxy, but the orthodoxy which has learnt from Kierkegaard and Barth becomes too easily a closed circle, in which believer speaks only to believer, in which all human content is concealed. Turning aside from this arid in-group theology, the most perceptive theologians wish to translate what they have to say to an atheistic world. But they are doomed to one of two failures. Either they succeed in their translation: in which case what they find themselves saying has been transformed into the atheism of their hearers. Or they fail in their translation: in which case no one hears what they have to say but themselves.

It is this last alternative which leads to the hothouse atmosphere of so much theological discussion; it is the former which leads to Dr. Robinson's conclusions. We can see now that Dr. Robinson's voice is not just that of an individual, that his book testifies to the existence of a whole group of theologies which have retained a theistic vocabulary but acquired an atheistic substance. Yet how can these continue to coexist? To answer this question we must look at the social context of this type of theology.

[6] Heinemann, 25s.

Dr. Robinson writes as if the secularisation of the modern world were an accomplished and a recognised fact. If he were correct we should expect a corresponding sense of triumph in secularist writers. In fact we find too often the same uneasiness that we discover in the theologians.

Dr. Gerhard Szczesny's *The Future of Unbelief*[6] caused a minor sensation when it appeared in Germany. It had its place in the whole history of the rise of a dissenting intelligentsia in post-war Germany (a piece of cultural history almost unknown in England). But Szczesny's argument is doubly paradoxical. For he argues first that we ought to recognise that we are now living in "a post-Christian era," and the paradox is that if this were clearly true there would be no need to call upon people to recognise it. Szczesny would not have to fight against the cultural orthodoxy of the CDU/CSU. And when Szczesny goes on to construct his humanist alternative to Christianity the criteria to which he appeals are ordinary humanist ones. So that unless people are already convinced secularists they are unlikely to listen to him. Moreover, he formulates his alternative in terms of fairly abstract and hence unobjectionable principle. Justice, equality, and honesty are all commended. Yet anyone who lived through the German catastrophe must know that the problem is not whether justice, equality, and honesty are admirable; the problem is how to embody them in social institutions. And to solve this problem we have to recognise clearly what our existing social order is. If we do so we shall see that it is very far from being completely secularised.

England is perhaps an untypical country. We have neither the ecclesiastical political parties of Europe nor the majority churchgoing of the United States. But we experience many of the same pressures, and we therefore find analogous religious phenomena. The number of Easter communicants in the Church of England has risen very slowly but fairly steadily for a decade-and-a-half. Over half the marriages in England take place in Anglican churches. Over half the children eligible for Anglican baptism are so baptised. Between the 10 per cent or so of clear and convinced Christians at one end of the scale and the 10 per cent or so of convinced sceptics at the other, there is the vast mass of the population, mostly superstitious to some degree, using the churches and especially the

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Church of England to celebrate birth, marriage, and death, and to a lesser degree Christmas. This use or misuse of the churches is rooted in a set of vague, half-formulated and inconsistent beliefs.

In 1944–45 *Mass-Observation* carried out a survey in a London borough on the topic of religious belief which was published under the title of *Puzzled People*. In 1960 they quota-sampled the same borough. The inconsistency of both self-styled believers and self-styled unbelievers is perhaps the most striking single fact. In both 1945 and 1960 over 40 per cent of those attending Anglican services said that they did not believe in a life after death, while at least a quarter of those classed as doubters, agnostics, and atheists said that they prayed, and over 20 per cent of them said that Christ was more than a man. Tom Harrison's account of these people's beliefs in *Britain Revisited* is consistent with the answers that industrial workers gave to Dr. Ferdynand Zweig on religious questions, and in *The British Worker* Dr. Zweig concludes that 80 per cent of workers have some sort of "vague belief." But it would be sadly mistaken to suppose that this state of affairs is confined to working-class adults and children. The survey of contemporary attitudes among the readers of *New Society* (May 1963) showed a majority both for the belief that Christian morality is moribund and for the belief that this is a sad thing. But the majority also believe—what the authoritative exponents of Christianity deny—that divorce should be made easier. So we find among some of the best-educated by our conventional standards a paradoxical wish to hold on to a morality which conflicts with their own morality on matters of central importance. Behind this paradox one senses a belief that Christian theology is false and a wish that it were not, which at other social levels appears as the kind of half-belief which I have described.

THE SOURCES of this lack of consistency are several. The folk-beliefs of the English cannot be understood without understanding the whole history of Christianity's rearguard actions, including the highly dubious use of religion in war-time. But we can discover one clue to the immediate causes of the confusion if we notice that 67 per cent of children who are subjected to Anglican baptism decline to a 24 per cent who find their way to confirmation; and there is another steep decline to the figures for adult church-going.

It is just not true that children in this country are indoctrinated in Christianity as a result of the 1944 Education Act. What they *are* indoctrinated in is confusion. This confusion is rooted in the fact that on the one hand religious instruction is compulsory, and yet on the other it is clear that schools do not take it seriously in the way that they do basic literacy or subjects such as history or chemistry. Since teachers usually do not even attempt to give any criteria for accepting or rejecting belief, many children naturally remain in a half-light between acceptance and rejection. Secularised? Not at all. The secondary modern school-children of whom Dr. Harold Loukes wrote in *Teenage Religion* (SCM Press) would suggest, for example, that the question of whether God did or did not make the world could not be answered because nobody else can have been there to see. If they do believe in God, it is often the God "up there" (literally, physically "up") whom Dr. Robinson thinks has been incredible for a long time.

Christianity provided pre-industrial England with a common frame of reference, with a sense of over-all meaning and with a pattern which gave form to life. Revolutionary protest from the Levellers to the Chartists could express itself within this pattern just as much as the conservatism of the squirearchy. But industrial society has never been able to accommodate a religious interpretation of its own activities. The founders of atheist humanism hoped for and predicted secularisation not merely in the sense of abandonment of religious belief and practice, but in the sense of a transformation of human goals and hopes from other-worldly into this worldly. The present was to be judged and transcended, not by looking to the justice of heaven but by looking to that of the future. The hope of glory was to be, and in some important measure was, replaced by the hope of Utopia.

But we have neither glory nor Utopia to hope for. The hope that a secular Utopian tradition, whether Liberal or Marxist, sought to provide was never realised. The routines of working-class life, the competitive ladders of the middle classes, absorb us into immediacy. We are dominated by a present to which the idea of a radically different future is alien. What conventional politics promises us is always a brighter version of what we have now. This is why political talk about ends and aims is always doomed to become rhetoric. In this situation

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the substance of religious belief is no longer with us, but in our ordinary secular vocabulary we have no language to express common needs, hopes, and fears that go beyond the immediacies of technique and social structure.

What we do have is a religious language, which survives even though we do not know what to say in it. Since it is the only language we have for certain purposes it is not surprising that it cannot be finally discarded. But since we have no answers to give to the questions we ask in it, it remains continually in need of re-interpretation, re-interpretation that is always bound to fail. We should therefore expect to find continual attempts to use religious language to mask an atheistic vacuum, and sooner or later someone was bound to try to preserve the religious language and the atheistic content together by suggesting, although not of course explicitly, that the latter simply *is* the meaning of the former. Not that this suggestion could possibly work a cure for any of our ills. The only cure lies in the transformation of our social structures; *within* theological discourse, as Feuerbach and Marx saw, we are bound to remain blind to the human significance of theological discourse. Hence Dr. Robinson's book needs not only to be understood as a symptom of our condition, but to be sympathised with as a desperate attempt that cannot succeed.

IF THE CORE of my argument is correct, then we should be able to construct an hypothesis about contemporary moral theology. Either it will remain within the theological closed circle: in which case it will have no access to the public and shared moral criteria of our society. Or it will accept those criteria: in which case it may well have important things to say, but these will not be distinctively Christian. I take it as partial confirmation of my argument, therefore, that when we encounter Cambridge theologians grappling with real moral problems[7] it turns out that their Christianity is residual. This is not to say that they have not learnt from Jesus and from Christian traditions; but rather, that they have learnt in ways that are accessible to the atheist too.

When Professor D. M. Mackinnon writes about extra-marital intercourse he judges alternatives in terms of human concepts of integrity and stability. He criticises some uses of the notion of sacrifice in Christian morality. He argues that Christianity is a unique source of moral inspiration, because it tries to hold together the truth about what men are and the need for them to be merciful to one another. But he presents these as truths for anyone to grasp, whether Christian or not. And this is true also of the outstanding contribution to the debate from among the Cambridge theologians, which is made by Mr. H. A. Williams in his essay on "Psychological Objections to Christianity".

Williams' attack is directed against the moral forms of contemporary Christianity. He exposes the fake character of a great deal of remorse and searching of conscience by describing its role in providing a welcome barrier to genuine self-knowledge. He brings out excellently the way in which condemnation of overt breaches of the sexual code, whether in ourselves or in others, can be a symptom of a more than ambiguous attitude to sexuality, and how the price of self-knowledge and truthfulness may be a life which conventional Christianity condemns. Williams finds a clue to Christianity in Christ's obvious preference for publicans and sinners over the clergy. Williams could scarcely be more severe in his treatment of his own religion, and if it is necessary to ask whether he goes far enough, it is not because one could go any farther in that direction. It is rather that he never asks what makes traits like conscientiousness and a sense of duty so important to contemporary Christianity. The answer is that these traits belong to the manner in which we act; they do not define the contents of our actions. Injunctions to repent, to be responsible, even to be generous, do not actually tell us what to *do*. And about the content of the moral life Christians in fact have no more to say than anyone else. Christians behave like everyone else but use a different vocabulary in characterising their behaviour, and so conceal their lack of distinctiveness. Thus true self-knowledge for Christians would involve the uncovering of much more than a retreat by individuals into neurotic self-concealment. But even in this Christians only reflect a general predicament.

All those in our society who self-consciously embrace beliefs which appear to confer importance and righteousness upon the holder become involved in the same strategies. The fact that their beliefs make so little difference either to them or to others leads to the same concern with being right-minded rather than effective.

[7] *Objections to Christian Belief*. Four Lectures by D. M. MACKINNON, H. A. WILLIAMS, A. R. VIDLER, and J. S. BEZZANT. Constable, 12s. 6d.

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Hygienic, liberal, periodical-reading progressives, who are against capital punishment and blood sports, tend to be quite as nasty as Christians are, in this respect.

And there are many other varieties of the neurotic self-deceiver. When Williams tries to accuse his fellow-Christians of believing not in God, but Nobodaddy, I hope that he makes them wince. But I hope he also makes all those of us wince who have turned conscientious atheism into a substitute Nobodaddy of our own.

THE ONE PERSON in the discussion clearly determined not to wince is the Archbishop of Canterbury. His pamphlet, *Image Old and New*, misses almost all the points. Dr. Robinson is treated as an unbalanced reformer who has stressed some aspects of the Christian faith at the expense of others. Ascetic retreat from the world and unbreakable rules still have their place. (Why do unbreakable rules always turn out to be about sex and not about war?) But the worst feature of his pamphlet is the paternalistic tone. He calls Bonhoeffer's views "thoughts mature in depth but often incomplete, alas, in their working out" and wonders whether, had he lived, he would not have changed his views. He seeks to spread reassurance.

But reassurance is just what Christians should not be looking for at this point in their history. It is not Dr. Robinson who will be disturbing them, if they are disturbed. The fragility of their religion is due not to the theologians but to its role in our social life. This the theologians only reflect. But it is not surprising that when they reflect it as faithfully as Dr. Robinson has done all the vices of self-deception which Mr. Williams castigates are brought into play, as they have notably been brought into play in so much of the response to *Honest to God*.

Because all this is so, it is highly important that the theologians should not be left alone with their discussions, to carry them on as *they* please. For the significance of their discussions extends far beyond theology. The public response to *Honest to God* helped to make this clear. But in the next phase when the issues are less immediately newsworthy, the danger is that God will once more be treated as an in-group totem. Once there were organised secularist groups (the Rationalist Press Association, the Ethical Union, and the like) which could have assisted in ensuring that the discussion continued in the public forum. But all these groups essentially became nonconformist churches and share in the general decline of nonconformity. So one gets the pathos of humanist groups in universities which are imitations of the Student Christian Movement. At the moment one cannot dispense with this kind of group, if only because it provides a counterweight to the Christians. But the danger is that atheism is then treated as if it too is the private creed of yet another minority religious group, whereas atheism is in fact expressed in most of our social life.

The difficulty lies in the combination of atheism in the practice of the life of the vast majority, with the profession of either superstitution or theism by that same majority. The creed of the English is that there is no God and that it is wise to pray to him from time to time.

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J. L. Talmon

The Age of Revolution

HISTORIANS nowadays may roughly be classified as upholders of the Leopold Ranke maxim that the historian's task is to describe *"wie es eigentlich gewesen,"* or as followers of Jacob Burckhardt's school whose view is that history is "the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another." There is not much love lost between the two camps. The former sulkily murmur that the others are journalists, and those among them who are addicted to strong language hint at charlatanism. The Burckhardtians shrug off their opponents more indulgently as antiquarians or stamp collectors, certainly useful wood-choppers, but dullards all the same.

Mr. E. H. Carr is certainly right in his Trevelyan Lectures on *What is History?* in having

> no patience with the fashion set by J. B. Bury in his inaugural lecture of pretending that Mommsen's greatness rests not on his *History of Rome* [a thinly veiled tract on Mommsen's time and for his time] but on his corpus of inscriptions and his work on Roman constitutional law: this is to reduce history to the level of compilation. . . . Great history is written precisely when the historian's vision of the past is illuminated by insights into the problems of the present.

The late Sir Lewis Namier put it neatly—"the historians imagine the past and remember the future." The key-word in this controversy is surely significance, but significance in a twofold sense. The historian is called upon to portray things in the order of importance they had for the people who lived at the time; to see through their eyes, trying his utmost to recapture the way this or that fact or event seemed significant to them. He is no less, however, concerned with what came of those events when looked upon from the vantage point of his own age. Consciously or unconsciously he is egged on by a quest for identity and the need for self-justification. He looks for situations in the past to help him to fix his bearings in his own world. More generally, he searches for samples of the human condition as a whole.

Events which excited one age as colossal appear to men a century after as episodes of no consequence, while things which hardly attracted any notice from most people at the time assume from the standpoint of future generations the character of beginnings of vast and world-shaking developments. The affairs of Spain and Portugal—to take examples from the period covered by the book under review*—exercised the minds of all politically interested around 1840. Those events received added spice from the shabby attempt of that sage and upright Protestant statesman, philosopher, and historian, Guizot, to force an impotent bridegroom upon the unfortunate Queen of Spain, Isabella II. As so often in Spanish history, "a civil war became internationalised" by inter-power conflict over intervention and non-intervention. Even a publicist of the Left like Louis Blanc devotes, in his *Histoire de dix ans*, endless pages to that crisis. A historian to-day would make himself ridiculous if he were to accord so much attention to those Iberian troubles and then, in keeping with what attracted the contemporaries' notice, was to dismiss as a marginal occurrence the opening of the five Chinese ports to European trade at the end of the Opium War. The goings and comings of the Tsar of all the Russias, Nicolas I, the Emperor of Austria, the feeble-minded Ferdinand I, and the half-demented (and soon wholly insane) Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia in the very centre of the world's stage in 1840 seem now almost irrelevant, in comparison with what was going on at that very time among the rough frontiersmen of North America, when Andrew Jackson became President; or when compared with the debates in the conventicles of the obscure radical exiles in Paris and Bruxelles, from whom the invitation went out to the youthful Dr. Karl

* *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789–1848*. By E. J. HOBSBAWM. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 50s.

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Marx and Friedrich Engels to prepare the political statement of aims which came to be known as *The Communist Manifesto*.

All the same, no historian of integrity, however intense his preoccupation with distant consequences, could feel himself free from the obligation to bear in mind that things looked very differently to the people with whom he is dealing than they appear to him. One may say he should always experience a kind of sense of guilt towards our ancestors for treating them not as ends in themselves, in the spirit of Ranke's other dictum that all ages are born equal in the eyes of God, but as intermediary stations and stepping stones to dénouements of decades or even centuries to come. This constant and gnawing reminder may act as a salutary antidote and hold the historian back from simply selecting samples from the past to fight an issue of his own time. The "present-minded" historian is supposedly in no danger of regarding any historical work as definitive, and no historical judgment can be to him final.

DR. ERIC HOBSBAWM presents his credentials and formulates his intentions unambiguously in his preface:

> The object of this book is not detailed narrative, but interpretation and what the French call *haute vulgarisation*. Its ideal reader is that theoretical construct, the intelligent and educated citizen, who is not merely curious about the past, but wishes to understand how and why the world has come to be what it is to-day and whither it is going.

The author defines his theme as "the transformation of the world between 1789 and 1848 in so far as it was due to what is called the 'dual revolution'—the French Revolution of 1789 and contemporaneous (British) Industrial Revolution," and calls it "the greatest transformation in human history since the remote times when men invented agriculture and metallurgy, writing, the city and the state." He intelligently draws our attention to the fact that so many of those words without which our language today could hardly be imagined, like "industry," "factory," "middle class," "working class," "capitalism," "socialism," "aristocracy," "railway," "statistics," "sociology," "liberal," "conservative," "nationality," "scientist," "engineer," "proletariat," "economic," "crisis," "ideology," "journalism," "strike," and so on, were all coined in the period with which *The Age of Revolution* is concerned. That age cast the mould of our thinking and it produced the climate in which we still live. In other words the sixty years between 1789 and 1848 are contemporary history.

It is no accident that Dr. Hobsbawm called his book "The Age of Revolution," in the singular. He appears to consider the series of revolutions from 1789 to 1848 in the various countries as incidents of one Revolution. It is not out of place, considering the well-known political views of the author, to go further and enquire of him whether his title meant to imply that the Revolution which had its take-off in the late 18th century was still on, had not yet run its course, and would not come to a halt till it had brought about a preordained universal dénouement. It is out of genuine respect for Eric Hobsbawm and his brilliant work that the reviewer feels prompted to use such a measuring yard as this. It would be no compliment to treat his book as just another useful handbook of *haute vulgarisation* setting out all the known facts in a well-constructed treatise written in a highly readable style.

Dr. Hobsbawm represents a remarkable combination. He has a keen interest in detail, often colourful and unusual detail (about, for instance, primitive rebels in outlandish places), and is at the same time endowed with a speculative mind. And he has the taste and ability for generalisation. He writes vividly, with a knack for a cutting, ironical phrase, and with no trace of that wooden jargon of writers of his persuasion. His enviable assortment of languages is matched by the width of his interests (among which his expertise in jazz opens to him a source of life-enhancing enjoyment denied to so many other workers in his field). Finally he is an *"engagé,"* who is not inhibited by any considerations from identifying himself openly and organisationally with a camp set apart from the common run. He is a person of such integrity that his virtue becomes his vice; too loyal to quit, he is too independent to conform; he thus comes to earn the unspeakable name of "revisionist."

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT thing about *The Age of Revolution* is that it stops short of 1848. In the concluding chapter, "Towards 1848," Hobsbawm rightly says of the revolutionary wave of 1848 that

> rarely has revolution been more universally predicted . . . an entire continent waited . . . for the revolution which broke out in the first months of 1848 was not a social revolution merely in the sense that it involved and mobilised all social classes. It was in the literal sense the rising of the labouring poor in the cities—especially the capital cities—of Western and Central Europe. . . . When the dust settled on their ruins, workers—in France actually socialist workers—were seen to be standing on them, demanding not merely bread and employment, but a new state and society . . . their dream of a new and better world gave their desperation eyes and a purpose.

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The evaluation of 1848 is vital for any attempt to answer the question: was the 19th century the age of Revolution or the century of the *taming of the Revolution* (at all events in the West)? The author is not unconscious of the problem and he says: "Looking back on the 1840s it is easy to think that the socialists who predicted the imminent final crisis of capitalism were dreamers confusing their hopes with realistic prospects. For in fact what followed was not the breakdown of capitalism but its most rapid and unchallenged period of expansion and triumph." In the final passage of his Introduction, Hobsbawm writes:

> "The "spectre of Communism" already haunted Europe by 1848. It was exorcised in 1848. For long thereafter it was to remain as powerless as spectres in fact are, especially in the Western world immediately transformed by the dual revolution. But if we look round the world in the 1960s we shall not be tempted to underestimate the historic force of the revolutionary socialist and communist ideology born out of reaction against the dual revolution, and which had by 1848 found its classic formulation.

Indeed, no one would. But anyone is bound to raise the question upon a higher plane and to employ more emphatic terms by querying whether the victory of the Revolution in the East should be treated as the delayed action of the revolutionary spirit which seized the West a hundred and twenty-five years ago. If in the West the Revolution had been tamed for good by 1848, the Revolution (or revolutions) which overtook the East in the next century may well be a phenomenon springing from a context of its own, notwithstanding all the efforts to hitch it on to pre-1848 Western patterns of thought. In this case the Communist movement in the contemporary West may appear as a response to a myth which took on flesh only in the East, a wash-back rather than an autonomous growth.

These questions can hardly be answered without a prior definition of the concept of Revolution. Do we mean a series of revolutionary changes in the social-economic structure which lead to the re-modelling of the institutions and laws of a country and the substitution of certain ruling groups by others? Or do we mean the all-pervading conviction that History is moving to a revolutionary dénouement on a global scale, to a breakthrough towards some final social order embodying total justice and reason? That the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* and then Lenin and Trotsky unshakeably held such a belief there can be no doubt; as presumably Mao Tse Tung still does. No reader, however, of the West's Socialist literature of sixty and seventy years ago—Kautsky or Jaurès, indeed even Engels in his declining years, not to speak of Eduard Bernstein or the Fabians—can be impervious to the difference in climate and tone between them and the young Marx or Lenin.

Whether one speaks of revolutionary changes or "Revolution" is decisive for the assessment of the nature of the crisis created by the coming of Industrialism. If the latter view is held, one is bound to set out with the assumption that the Industrial Revolution brought with it a structural crisis in society, produced an apocalyptic situation which had never existed before and is inexorably driving to a world-wide and total revolutionary transformation. The historian who thinks in terms of revolutionary changes will portray an age overwhelmed by changes for which it was caught unprepared, and requiring time and experience to respond to the challenge. There appears then a straight road from the first Factory Act to Keynes, the Health Service, and the Welfare State, the travellers upon which —some sluggishly, some selfishly—were prodded on by strong pressures and rebellious threats from below.

> The labour movement [writes Dr. Hobsbawm] provided an answer to the poor man's cry. It must not be confused with the more collective revulsion against intolerable hardship, which occurs throughout recorded history, or even with the practice of striking and other forms of militancy which have since become characteristic of labour. These also have a history which goes back beyond the industrial revolution. What was new in the labour movement of the early 19th century was class consciousness and class ambition. The "poor" no longer faced the "rich." A specific *class*, the labouring class, workers, or proletariat, faced another, the employers and capitalists. The French Revolution gave this new class confidence, the industrial revolution impressed on it the need for permanent mobilisation. A decent livelihood could not be achieved merely by the occasional protest which served to restore the stable but temporarily disturbed balance of society. It required the eternal vigilance, organisation, and activity of the "movement"—the trade union, the mutual or co-operative society, the working-class institute, newspaper, or agitation. But the very novelty and rapidity of the social change which engulfed them encouraged the labourers to think in terms of an entirely changed society, based on their experience and ideas as opposed to their oppressor. It would be co-operative and not competitive, collectivist and not individualist. It would be "socialist." And it would represent not the eternal dream of the free society, which poor men always have at the backs of their minds but think about only on the rare occasions of general social revolution, but a permanent, practicable alternative to the present system.

All this has been formulated more emphatically before Dr. Hobsbawm, who seems often rather

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sparing and selective in acknowledgments. The essential difference is between social resentment and rebellious wrath (which for centuries expressed itself in sulky anger, occasional jacquerie and riot, or in paradisal dreams) on the one hand, and the birth of an alternative programme of a total, revolutionary, and, as it were, predestined transformation, on the other—but when, how, and why did it come about? The new attitude was not the outcome of the Industrial Revolution, however intensified it was by industrial growth. It was postulated by the philosophers on the eve of 1789 and became a living and articulate passion of the masses in the French Revolution, to be then applied to the experiences of the Industrial Revolution. Events, facts, data, happenings assume their significance from the way in which they are experienced. To be kicked about was for a slave in antiquity or for a Chinese coolie only yesterday a matter of course, but the birching of a schoolboy in our day is considered by most people in the West as something absolutely horrifying.

That the conditions created by the Industrial Revolution were bad is not to be doubted (although Dr. Hobsbawm himself recognises the very great uncertainty as to whether there has really been an all-round deterioration in the condition of workers, and he is even prepared to admit that the industrial workers were rather better off than before). They appeared all the more terrible because those who were formerly called "lower orders" had by then a totally different notion of what is due to them—men—than the wretched poor of the old days. The social system appeared absurd, wrong, and unjust, because there was a vision of a rational and just order which was frustrated only by deliberate selfish wickedness.

IT IS, OF COURSE, nonsense to portray history as the abstract story of interlocking disembodied ideas (are there still historians who do that?), but it is certainly lack of imagination and crude doctrinaire addiction that leads some historians of the French Revolution who belong to the Marxist persuasion to reduce "mighty longings and strivings" to riots over the rising price of bread, and to play down the "ideologues." Any one of them would be up in arms at the suggestion that the writings of Marx and the ideas of Lenin had nothing to do with the Bolshevik Revolution and the shape of the Soviet system, and was due to nothing else but the evils of the Tsarist régime, its contradictions, deficits, and bad harvests. We live in a soberer age and use greyer prose than Michelet, Lamartine, or Carlyle, whose incantations and flamboyant tableaux make us wince to-day, and who could see only ideas and destinies personified in an epic struggle. But even a much more restrained writer like Alexis de Tocqueville (who certainly took great pains with administrative detail and constitutional practice) could do justice to the intense reality of creeds and passions, of men and masses, of faith moving mountains.

It is difficult to imagine a more effective clarion call to Revolution than Rousseau's *Discours sur l'Inégalité* and *Contrat Social*, when taken together. One is a paranoiac *cri de cœur* about the way all things have gone wrong; cupidity and avarice had destroyed original equality, and in order to draw a veil upon their selfish dominion gave to their *arcana imperii* the name of law and morality. The other formulates a sole and exclusive principle of political legitimacy: the "social contract" concluded between men who are both free and equal. The very essence of the contract is the postulate of unanimity, because liberty and equality can be reconciled only if and when we are all unanimous (in fact, or made to appear so); otherwise there is no escape from the dominion of men over men. The expectation of eventual unanimity and the condemnation of parties as vehicles of selfish partial interests at variance with the general will (and interest) add up pretty well to a vague and rudimentary vision of a classless society and one-party system. Pending the arrival of that state of things, or rather in order to hasten its coming, "all revolutionaries" —Dr. Hobsbawm rightly observes, when speaking of the plotters and rebels of the first half of the 19th century—"regarded themselves . . . as small élites of the emancipated and progressive operating among and for the eventual benefit of a vast and inert mass of the ignorant and misled common people which would no doubt welcome liberation when it came, but could not be expected to take much part in preparing it." Ultimate perfect democracy must be preceded by the dictatorship of the vanguard, who is called upon to carry out the breakthrough and then bring about the social-economic and spiritual conditions necessary for unanimity to come to fruition.

THE FACT THAT (as Dr. Hobsbawm says in an aside) Rousseau is mentioned only three times in the whole of the correspondence between Marx and Engels (in their writings the name appears more often) proves nothing. We all talk the Gospel and Kant, Marx and Freud, without mentioning them explicitly. They have become essential, and therefore unnoticed, ingredients of the atmosphere we breathe and the language we speak. Just as Lenin and Plekhanov, Trotsky and Stalin were steeped in Marx, and were under the almost obsessive compulsion to think

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what Marx said or would have said and done in each new situation, so were Robespierre and Marat, the early Sieyès and Saint-Just soaked in Rousseau, that "divine, sublime philosopher," and "friend of mankind." Tocqueville concludes the chapter "How, towards the middle of the 18th century, men of letters became the chief politicians of the country, and the effects resulting therefrom" in his *L'Ancien régime et la Révolution* with the words:

> I have often been astonished in the course of my public life at the sight of men, who have scarcely read books of the 18th century or indeed of any other and have strongly expressed their contempt of authors, and yet retain so faithfully some of the worst faults created by the literary spirit before they were born.

No one would suggest that Rousseau's ideas (or should we rather employ Burkean vocabulary and speak of Rousseau's massive sentiments?) came into his brain from the thin air, and then sprang fully armed from the forehead of that lonely, exasperatingly contradictory madman from Geneva. Nor would one be so silly as to maintain that Rousseau "alone" made the French Revolution. It is not a question really of abstract, syllogistic reasoning at all, but of patterns of thought, feeling, and behaviour, of frames of mind and the climate of an age, of what is nowadays called the "collective traumatic experiences" of a generation when faced with concrete events and unexpected situations.

MAN IS IN NEED of bread, but he is no less in need of a faith in the broadest sense of the word, of a system of values, a set of bearings.

A great vacuum was created by the decline of the religious sanction which was the concomitant of the utter weariness with religious quarrels and bloody, inconclusive wars of religion. It was filled by the secular religion of "political messianism" or "totalitarian democracy." The rapid spread of the new creed was facilitated by the break-up of fixed forms and traditional ties resulting in both greater social mobility and spiritual uprootedness. When the revolutionary upheaval of 1789 broke out, men were already fashioned to face it, conditioned to read a certain meaning into the events, and to act in accordance with that reading. Of course there was no ready blue-print, and men improvised under the impact of unforeseen situations. But while improvising they could not help generalising their own particular experiences and reactions to them into lessons of universal validity for all times and all nations These experiences and generalisations were taken by the devotees of the Revolution to be no mere empirical precepts, but part of a colossal drama, and were woven into a myth with an almost unimaginable grip on the minds and hearts of believers.

There is nothing new, says Tocqueville, in powerful and rebellious spirits rising against this or that belief or custom. "What singles out the 18th century is that that audacious and reforming curiosity was experienced by a whole generation, and was directed at the same time to all beliefs in a way that the principles upon which the sciences, the arts, philosophy, politics rested until then, were attacked together by a sort of universal commotion." "To hear them talk"—writes Guizot—"one might think that they had the elements and ages at their command... and that these were the first days of creation or the last days of the world."

IN THE FIRST PLACE there was the traumatic feeling that the French Revolution had not really come to an end, but was still in motion, although it had been temporarily overpowered. And it would not and could not come to a halt till it had run its full preordained course. Earlier people spoke of revolutions; now they talked of The Revolution. The discovery made in the Revolution, indeed before it even started—by Sieyès in connection with the method of voting in the Estates General—that privileged classes do not give up willingly, that sweet persuasion was of no avail where massive interests were at stake, that force had to be used, was at once universalised into the doctrine of the eternity of the class struggle and the inevitability of revolutionary dictatorship and terror. War and famine, treason and corruption, acted of course as catalysts of terrorist dictatorship. But it was the depth of fanatical devotion to the Revolutionary cause that made opposition or resistance appear the more devilish, and therefore the more deserving implacable punishment and necessitating suppression. If the Revolutionary side raised the stakes to their utmost, things were bound to be driven to a pass where there was either total victory of the total Revolution or total triumph of the most vindictive counter-revolution.

IT WAS NOT THAT the Industrial Revolution by engendering new conditions gave rise to new ideas. The French Revolution, its ideas and traumas, conditioned men to experience and interpret the Industrial Revolution in a way that would have been quite unthinkable had the technological and social-economic changes taken place earlier. And that is true even of the seemingly strictly economic lessons of the Industrial Revolution. Because there was a postulate

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of a rational social order, *laissez-faire* capitalism looked all the more anarchical, chaotic, and absurdly wasteful. Babeuf, and even more articulately the Saint-Simonists and Fourier, detected a dialectical economic inevitability driving towards collectivism, and worked out a rudimentary theory of the recurrent crises leading to an apocalyptic dénouement. The lessons of the scientific and technological revolution were harnessed as scientific proofs for the ethical-political postulate. The shape of things to come was no longer merely a pious wish or righteous dream, but a scientifically proved necessity. History similarly was harnessed in order to anchor the foretold great transformation to a vast chain of historical evolution, with the various necessary phases marked out from the beginning till the end of time. It was due to the ideas of the rights of man that the workers woke up to the fact that they were the producers of all wealth, a truth that somehow had escaped the notice of the countless generations of serfs and small folk up to that date.

After the right to happiness—"a new idea," according to Saint-Just—had been proclaimed, it was natural that the evils of the Industrial Revolution should be taken to be intolerable. When the idea of equality was faced with the fact of an unprecedented and seemingly limitless growth of productive capacity, men nurtured on the Revolutionary faith would no longer submit to the old-fashioned teachings that the many must labour for the few because (God's bounties being limited) a sample of civilised life upheld by a small number of the privileged was preferable to general barbarism resulting from equal distribution.

In Dr. Hobsbawm's own submission the changes around 1840 were after all smaller than popularly imagined:

> The bulk of the world inhabitants continued to be peasants as before... the position of the landed aristocrats, also changed less than might have been thought, the middle classes increased rapidly, but even so their numbers were not overwhelmingly large... the working classes measured against the total population of the world was still . . . numerically negligible. . . . Yet, its political importance was already immense and quite disproportionate to its achievements.

Why? Because men were sharing a traumatic experience, were on the look-out for signs and proofs, and their sensitiveness was conditioned to respond more powerfully to certain stimuli (which of course no one denies were real enough). French writers around 1840 made a very acute distinction between old type *pauvreté* and contemporary *misère*. The former was felt to be a punishment from heaven; the latter was experienced as man-made (and was also different in that it included the added malaise of the uprooted and the injured).

We find a striking corroboration of the "primacy of ideas" in Engels' short essay *On the History of the Communist League*. Speaking of the members of the League in the 1840s when he and Marx first came in contact with them, he writes:

> I do not believe there was a single man in the whole League at that time who had ever read a book on political economy. But that mattered little; for the time being "equality," "brotherhood," and "justice" helped them to surmount every theoretical obstacle.

HOBSBAWM SPEAKS of "the gigantic paradox" that is France. "On paper no country should have advanced more rapidly (on the road towards Industrial Revolution). It possessed... institutions ideally suited to capitalist development. The ingenuity and inventiveness of its entrepreneurs was without parallel in Europe.... Yet in fact French economic development at the base was distinctly slower than that of other countries." In France "they [the revolutionary measures] established that impregnable citadel of small and middle-peasant proprietors, small craftsmen and shopkeepers, economically retrogressive but passionately devoted to Revolution and Republic." Dr. Hobsbawm fails to see the other aspects of the paradox, that notwithstanding this social-economic backwardness, France produced in the first half of the 19th century the most luxuriant crop of Socialist theories, myths of Revolution, and programmes of direct revolutionary action. A traumatic experience was working itself out. The late Sir Lewis Namier has dwelt on the traumatic nature of the "gigantic paradox" from a different angle. For well over a century French political life was decisively bedevilled by spectres of perils which were as dead as cold mutton. The Right dreaded another 1793, and the Left lived in constant fear of the return of feudalism. This is why the parliamentary system could strike no roots in France. The essential condition for its success—mutual trust and a determination to observe the rules of the game—were lacking where protagonists looked upon each other as mortal enemies, instead of alternative trustees of a common weal.

Dr. Hobsbawm forgets another "gigantic paradox" and that is 19th-century England. It was the only country in which the Industrial Revolution had reached maturity by 1848, and in that very year Chartism, the greatest proletarian mass movement of the century, fizzled out on Kennington Common; and the evolutionary trend of English history was never again seriously threatened. Why? Because the French Revolution failed to touch England directly.

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Dr. Hobsbawm has some relevant things to say about Romanticism in the context of the Age of Revolution. In all its aspects that maddeningly elusive and heterogeneous movement had one root cause—the break in historic continuity. Owing to this, reality ceased to look self-evident. It was no longer simply taken for granted and unreflectingly lived. The sense of alienation, which was to play such a crucial part in Marx, drove some to social rebellion, made others turn inwards and cultivate the ideal of the anarchical "genius," evoked in some a craving for the bizarre, supernatural, and grandiose, caused many to worship the past and yearn for the warm grave of Medieval Church and organic community; it inspired, finally, not a few to build vast systems of historic inevitability.

The author adds a rather Marxist slant when he points out that "the real problem was that of the artist cut off from a recognisable function, patron or public, left to cast his soul as a commodity upon a blind market, to be bought or not, or to work within a system of patronage which would generally have been economically untenable even if the French Revolution had not established its human indignity."

Dr. Hobsbawm fails to notice that in their reaction against "the liberal assumption that society was a mere aggregate or combination of individual atoms," the Socialists found themselves standing on the same ground as the Right. What he calls the return "to the oldest of all natural ideological traditions, the belief that man is naturally a communal being"—and "that society was not a necessary but regrettable diminution of man's unlimited natural right to do as he liked, but the setting of his life, happiness, and individuality"—was common to both the Left and the Right, and at a deeper level than suggested by the author. Both stumbled upon the idea that it is not men who create society by making a social contract, but society which creates man. The Left spoke of "modes of production"; the Right of race, soil, blood, immemorial tradition and custom, the power of the dead over the living. The cast of mind was the same. There are some fine sociological insights in that ultramontane scholastic, Bonald, who upheld the *"nous"* as against *"moi," "religion de société"* against individualistic atomism, in a way very reminiscent of Saint-Simonism. The dangers to liberty inherent in that kind of approach are obvious.

This leads us to a crucial problem to which Dr. Hobsbawm fails to do justice, partly because he stops before 1848. He notes the fissure, which was in 1848 to become a chasm, between what he calls "bourgeois constitutionalism" (with limited suffrage) and Jacobin radical revolution or a social and democratic Republic. The present author found the very strong awareness of this fundamental difference between two types of democracy expressed around 1840 in the juxtaposition of two brands, Girondist and Jacobin, Voltairian and Rousseauist, American and "popular" (the word is actually used) democracy. Another vastly important dichotomy escapes Dr. Hobsbawm's attention: namely the rivalry between socialism and nationalism in the struggle for the soul of man. Admittedly so long as the various forces working for a liberating change considered themselves as one single camp pitted against a single enemy camp (that of old dynastic, counter-revolutionary Europe), men took it for granted that the struggle for constitutional, social, and national rights was indivisible. 1848 revealed that nationalism, far from being the natural ally of democracy and socialism, was the most dangerous obstacle in the way of a Revolutionary universal confraternity—and that when the national interest is proclaimed an end in itself and the supreme law, nationalism might well become an instrument of the Right and exercise the most corroding effect on liberal as well as socialist values. In 1848 the historic nations—Germany and Hungary—in full tide of the anti-dynastic Revolution were out to crush their national minorities, whereas the "unhistoric" awakening peasant Slav nationalities swelled the ranks of the Habsburg Armies which destroyed the Revolution.

Dr. Hobsbawm does not even consider nationalism as one of the causes of the 1848 wave of revolutions.

A rehearsal of the dialectical interplay between universalist proselytising and nationalist pride was given by the French Revolution itself. To Dr. Hobsbawm "the world of the 1840s was out of balance" and the Revolution was therefore inevitable, only because of the contradiction between the "unprecedented, irresistible . . . forces of economic, technical, and social change," and the "as yet modest . . . institutional consequences."

The "Age of Revolution" is the story of a tremendous traumatic shock experienced by one generation and then working itself out in the next generations. We have in this century lived through a series of traumas which continued to shape all our reactions and reflexes long after the actual experience had seemingly come to an end: the traumatic experience of World War I working itself out in the 1930s and well into World War II; the shock of the Spanish civil war and its effect on the European

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intellectuals of the Left; the Great Depression ghost continuing to stalk; Nazism-Fascism and appeasement irresistibly egging on Sir Anthony Eden to Suez; the October Revolution and then Stalinism; the murder of the Jews; Hiroshima. These experiences—coupled with Freud and Jung and modern psychology in general—lead one to think that the 19th-century historian's preoccupation with conditions and his search for a horizontal *Querschnitt* of reality caught at a certain moment are no longer adequate. A more vertical approach seems necessary, not indeed a return to the old-fashioned narrative type of history, but a reorientation towards a kind of case history method: not of individuals, but of groups, masses, nations, and (one almost fears to say it) mankind. It is to psychology that we have to look for a new fertilisation of historical thinking, just as historians in the 18th century sought guidance from the sciences, and their successors in the 19th had their sights sharpened by economics, sociology, and biology.

The "Age of Revolution" is an unfinished story, not merely because it stops on the eve of 1848, but also because, as said before, the waves set in motion then have not yet come to rest. But then no history is ever a finished story; true, and for this reason any historical statement is only a provisional one, and there can be no "definitive" histories. Periodic reviews and reappraisals are both inevitable and salutary. There is a marked air of indefiniteness and inconclusiveness about *The Age of Revolution*, in spite of the clear economic slant, when one considers the firm ideological commitment of the author. There is little in it that a progressive liberal or even enlightened conservative might not have said, if with more reservations and greater qualifications. The question arises whether that inconclusiveness is not another token of the fact that iron-cast certainties are in the process of loosening up and the dazzling mystique of Revolution has ceased to thrill or haunt.

From a Suburban Window

Such afternoon glooms, such clouds chimney low.
London, the clouds want to move but can not,
London, the clouds want to rain but can not.
Such negatives of a featureless day:
the street empty but for a van passing,
an afternoon smudged by old afternoons.
Soon, beyond railings, evening will come,
from a great distance, trailing evenings.
Meantime, unemployed sadness loiters here.

Quite suddenly, six mourners appear:
a couple together, then three stout men,
then one more, lagging behind, bare-headed.
Not one of the six looks up at the sky,
and not one of them touches the railings.
They walk on and on remembering days
yet seem content. They employ the décor,
they use this grey inch of eternity,
and the afternoon, so praised, grows distinct.

Dannie Abse

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Carolyn Kizer

A Month in Summer

First Day:

Several years ago I wrote this, in imitation of *haiku*:

> The frost was later this year:
> Crystal nips the petals
> As my lover grows impatient.

I can't think of an adequate way of rendering, "O my prophetic soul!" into acceptable *haiku*. Perhaps the situation itself is more tractable:

> Let down the curtain!
> Hamlet dies each night
> But is always revived.
> Love, too, requires genius.

Second Day:

> The drama of love:
> Scenes, intermissions
> Played by two actors,
> Their own spectators.

Third Day:

Strange how the tedium of love makes women babble, while it reduces men to a dour silence. As my voice skipped along the surfaces of communication like a water-bug, below it I sensed his quiet: the murky depths of the pond.

Alone, I play a Telemann concerto on the phonograph. A rather pedantic German note on the slip-case speaks of, "the curious, upward-stumbling theme." Can we be upward-stumbling? If so, there is hope for us.

> When you go away
> I play records till dawn
> To drown the echoes
> Of my own voice.

Fourth Day:

As a reaction from trying to please, one becomes reckless and resentful:

> Lights in every room.
> I turned on more!
> You sat with one hand
> Shading your eyes.

Fifth Day:

I listen to myself being deliberately annoying, deliberately irritating. I know so well, now, what he hates; I can so easily provoke it. It is a kind of furious attempt to rouse us both from the inert boredom with which we regard our life together. I'd like to sting him into madness, as if I were one of the Erinyes. I don't believe he is capable of understanding why I behave this way.

Sixth Day:

A party at which we play our customary roles. Later, when the guests go home, he says, "Let's have a serious talk." Invariably, he wants to have elaborate discussions only when I am dead with fatigue, and incapable of listening or talking. So I beg off. Reckless, impatient, I hurry him away.

Seventh Day:

Some friends come to visit for a few hours. My daughter Laurel picked roses for them, dozen after dozen, until the garden was stripped of ripening flowers. It was a relatively easy winter. The aphids seemed to be under control this year. One must not allow one's self to become superstitious about the tremendous, massive florescence of roses, nor about the great numbers of pregnant women.

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It doesn't necessarily mean that the days of the world are numbered; merely that the life-impulse is putting forth an extra effort, just in case.

Eighth Day:

We agree not to see each other for a while. Now for a period of bravado, while we pretend that we have no need for that total, mutual dependence which has been habitual for so long.

Ninth Day:

Sometimes it's best to run away for a little.

Tenth Day:

I decided to return the visit of my friends. So, with my two daughters, I drove south. When we arrived, we saw the flowers Laurel had picked for them three days earlier. We had packed the masses of roses—white, yellow, and heat-faded pink—into a ten-gallon jar. The bouquet is still a large, fresh globe, in spite of the warmth of a four-hour drive, and the passing of thirsty days.

> Roses should always
> Rest in glass containers
> Revealing the pattern
> Of packed thorns and stems.

How happy one can seem—even to one's self—in the presence of others!

Eleventh Day:

> On the porch two squirrels,
> Half-grown and chubby,
> Play at making love.
> And we parents smile.

Twelfth Day:

In the afternoon, my daughters and my father and I go out on a friend's boat, to the river that seems as vast as a sea. My old father stays in the cabin while the rest of the adults brace their feet on the deck and drink the spray. Laurel, eleven, sits inside with him and takes his hand, and says, "Are you all right grandpa?" I am touched by her gentle and tactful solicitude. And I reflect that there is a difference of over seventy years in their ages.

Thirteenth Day:

We came home last night. I drive slowly, with a cargo of two sleeping children. After they were in bed, I took presents to his house, as it was his birthday. But it looked as if he had retired for the night, so I left the gifts on the screen-porch.

> The shadow of leaves
> On your door, at night . . .
> I'm a young girl again,
> Tip-toeing home.

The pattern of the maple, etched by the street lamp shining against the side of his house reminded me of my own home, years ago. The silhouettes of leaves and whip-like branches of our old white birch would be flickering on the porch when I came home late and alone. Perhaps, too, that same sense of desolation I felt then: a young girl in a small town, without congenial friends, with ageing parents. Lovers as yet unmet, in the far-off cities of my imagination. . . .

Fourteenth Day:

He telephoned to ask if I would mind if he exchanged the present I had given him. I knew when I picked it out that he wouldn't care for it. Even in this perversity I'm not being original, but am behaving like every woman mismanaging every love affair on record. I suppose what we want is to be given a cuff, and be told to behave ourselves!

Fifteenth Day:

School is out for the summer. The children will be away for a few weeks, and I can concentrate all of my time and attention on being unhappy. One should always end a love-affair in summer, when one's social life is at an ebb, and the sun is shining. Sunlight provides the excuse for dark glasses to hide swollen eye-lids, and permits the important events of one's life to take place unwitnessed, as in Greek tragedy.

> Alone in my house
> I can make gross noises
> Like a caught hare or stoat
> Or a woman in labour.

Sixteenth Day:

Nearly every night I dream of my mother, dead these four years. I remember reading an account by a well-known doctor, himself the victim of the agonising disease which had been his speciality, saying that in extreme pain we all call for our mothers.

> I dream of the dead,
> Kind, brilliant and comforting.
> The lost return to us
> When we are lost.

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Seventeenth Day:

Inertia, planned and involuntary. Do things come to an end because we no longer have the energy to pursue them, or does the knowledge of this ending drain us of energy?

Eighteenth Day:

The pleasure of pain:
It destroys pretension.
We abandon effort
And live lying down.

Nineteenth Day:

Inertia.

One of the profound consolations in reading the works of Japanese men of letters is their frank acknowledgement of neurotic sloth. Or the overwhelming impulse, when faced with hurt or conflict, to stay in bed under the covers!

Twentieth Day:

Make a gigantic effort. Surely there are at least three or four persons, out of the four hundred thousand inhabitants of this city, whom I would care to see.

Later: I drove out to visit two artist friends. One of them is painting butterbur, but isn't fond of the name of it. I am reminded of the episode in Issa's journal when an 11 year-old priest named Takamaru slips while crossing a bridge, and is drowned. When his body is discovered, wedged between two rocks, "even the sleeves of those unused to weep were wet with tears when they discovered in his pocket a few blossoms of butterbur—just picked—perhaps intended as a happy present for his parents. . . ."

For G.:

Your paintings of butterbur
Might be called, "Colt's Foot"
Or, simply, "Homage
To Takamaru."

That should be suitably obscure!

G. is angry and impatient with his work: "They just look *pretty* and *cheap*!" he storms, and has to be restrained from doing away with them.

You hate the paintings
Made with such love.
Not you who are mad
But a mad century!

Twenty-First Day:

Is it suffering which defeminises? Or the sense that one is relinquishing sexual love, perhaps forever?

Neutered and wistful,
My spinster cat
Stands on my chest
And laps up my tears.

Each morning I am wakened by my own weeping, and the rasp, rasp of the little cat's tongue across my cheek.

Twenty-Second Day:

I run across my friend on the street and we talk for a bit. He urges me into a nearby "greasy spoon" for a cup of coffee. We sit at a table smeared with food and cluttered with soiled dishes. A water-glass holds cigarette stubs and wet ashes. I am feeling quite faint. No one waits on us. I get up to run away, but he insists that I sit down again. We analyse, very calmly, very objectively, the faults we find in one another. How trivial they are! Idiotic! Don't we dare to broach the larger topics? And love—doesn't it endure somewhere peacefully, like an underground river, beneath all this dust and meaningless commotion on the surface?

However, we both seem relieved of some tension by this exchange, and part amiably.

Twenty-Third Day:

No, I am *not*
A cricket in a matchbox,
Nor are you a boy,
To keep pets in your pocket.

We meet. We talk. And so? Nothing changes.

Twenty-Fourth Day:

An acquaintance reproaches me: "You shouldn't give him up. The world is overrun with lost, lonely women. Make any compromise." I am too arrogant to take something over nothing. But I well know that all my arrogance is going to be flayed out of me. I am going to be stripped and flayed of all of it. *He* doesn't know that he is going to do this to me; he protests violently when I tell him so. But I know it.

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Twenty-Fifth Day:

Strange how the range
Of possibility dwindles.
Imagination fails us
When we need her most.

There should be so many alternative courses of action. Instead, self-destruction becomes finally comprehensible.

The terror of loss:
Not the grief of a wet branch
In autumn, but the absolute
Arctic desolation.

One simply lies in the dark contemplating loss, as if it were luminous: in itself a kind of mystic experience.

Twentieth-Sixth Day:

Do I see him approaching? Instinctively, I flinch, duck my head, crook an arm across my face. I hurry past, and don't really know if he saw me or not.

Your handsomenesss. I find it
An irrelevant fact
To file away carefully
For my old age.

The other day I caught a glimpse of him playing the pin-ball machine in the same coffee shop where we met last week. Are *his* days such a wasteland then?

Twenty-Seventh Day:

Seen through tears
This moonlight
Is no more poignant
Than a saucer of cream.

Why the artifice of this *haibun*, which I have appropriated from a culture which doesn't belong to me? Perhaps to lose *me*. Perhaps because the only way to deal with sorrow is to find a form in which to contain it.

And, at last, it is surely time to study restraint?

Twenty-eighth Day:

A *tanka:* I stayed up all night
Till the sky turned to saffron
Behind black mountains.
I saw the colour of hell
Has its own kind of beauty.

Twenty-Ninth Day:

I was playing the same Telemann Concerto over and over. I bought two copies and gave one to my friend. Now I am reduced to wondering whether we are listening to the same record at the same time of night.

The music I play
This summer and fall:
Will I hear it at sixty
And be ready to die?

Perhaps at the extremes of happiness or unhappiness, one should take care that only inferior works of art will be contaminated by nostalgia. And after all, it is well known that a cheap popular song can arouse through its associations a more violent reaction than the greatest composition.

Art that solaces
During this time
Will catch the disfiguring
Disease of pain.

Thirtieth Day:

It's all over.

I realise now
The dialectic error:
Not love against death,
But hope, the bulwark.

Holding his letter, barely skimmed, in my hand, I drove to the house of my only intimate friend. She was not at home. I caught a glimpse of myself reflected in a window: a reeling ghost. Suddenly G., the artist, appeared before me. Though in ten years we've hardly exchanged a personal sentence, I took his hand and held it very tightly in both of mine, and he supported me along the street to my car.

Much later, at G.'s house, I saw the record of the Telemann which I had given my friend, lying on the table. So the links are broken.

Nothing remains.

And the worst, unimaginable until now: it is as if nothing had ever been.

"Is that what is meant by dwelling in
unreality?
And here too I end my words."

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Andrew Shonfield

Transatlantic Differences

The Rocky Road to "Atlantic Partnership"

AMERICAN STRATEGY as it has emerged after two years of Mr. Kennedy's presidency is an exercise in demonstrative contrasts. The President has made it clear that he is concerned above all to stress the contrast between the capacity of the western world to unite in common policies a multiplicity of different centres of power, all independent of one another, and the spreading cracks in the Soviet monolith on the other side. His thesis is the exact opposite of the Soviet claim advanced in the celebrated *Pravda* article at the beginning of this year analysing the quarrel with China:

> The differences between individual Communist parties on this or that matter do not have deep roots in the social system of the Socialist countries.... Whereas in the conditions of capitalism the contradictions have an objective foundation, and are therefore antagonistic in nature, the differences between Communist parties are primarily subjective.

The European Economic Community is the biggest single advertisement for the western claim. It may look a little tarnished, after its harsh treatment of Britain at the beginning of 1963; but this is unlikely to affect the American plan to use it as the sub-structure of the new international organisation in the West. The Americans also hope to exploit the European *mood*, which has contributed so much to the making of the Common Market, to construct the "concrete Atlantic partnership," which Mr. Kennedy formally offered to Europe in his Declaration of Interdependence (Speech at Philadelphia, 4 July 1962). The starting-point for this policy is the premise that the Russians might be tempted into conflict with the West by one thing only: the belief that they could divide and win. Faced therefore with a steady demonstration of western cohesion in policy and of active collaboration over a widening field of endeavour, the Russians will come to recognise that there is no possibility of victory. They will then find it worth while to negotiate a genuine agreement, including such matters as the control of nuclear weapons, which will produce something more secure than the present "balance of terror."

Plainly this policy fails if France manages to set herself up as the nucleus of a breakaway group from the Atlantic alliance. That is why Kennedy cannot remain passive for long in the face of General de Gaulle's challenge. For the present it may be sufficient to isolate the French among the Six, construct a kind of *cordon sanitaire* round them in NATO, and meanwhile do everything to foster good relations between Britain, the US, and the remaining "Friendly Five." But a strategy of demonstrative cohesion requires something more than that; it must have a base of visible growing points of common Atlantic policies. How are they to be created?

The simplest and most attractive answer would, at first sight, appear to be that the US itself should set out to provide a fresh and wider context within which the techniques developed in the European Common Market could continue to grow and flourish. That is in a sense what has been intended all along. The Americans have been impressed by the way the Common Market has set about its business, systematically advancing through a long series of stubborn problems by a combination of superior administrative expertise and highly sophisticated methods of bargaining. There is a widespread conviction among those concerned that the techniques developed by the Six in Europe are capable of being extended to the new forms of collaboration—in trade matters, in defence, in the day-to-day management of international currencies so that they cause less inconvenience than they do now—which are

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envisaged in the Atlantic partnership. This seems to me to be a reasonable view. I do not mean that the Common Market model in its entirety ought or could be applied to the Atlantic group. The European venture, after all, deliberately started off with a number of economic objectives which were politically loaded; indeed, the men who wrote the Treaty of Rome made no secret of their intention to make the political load as heavy as possible. Their tactics were simply to choose desirable objectives, like giving people greater freedom to trade and to get jobs outside their own countries, which involved a growing amount of supervision and interference in national affairs by the European authority in Brussels. The aim of an Atlantic organisation would be quite different—not to find excuses for setting up more and more common political institutions, but to discover the issues which actually threaten to produce friction between western Europe and the United States and then to set up machinery for reducing the friction to a minimum.

WHERE THE EUROPEAN experience is relevant is in the way it has pioneered a technique of international negotiation involving aspects of a country's domestic life. It is its insistence that useful agreements in the economic sphere must ignore the traditional distinction between what constitutes a nation's external policy and what is exclusively its internal concern which is the EEC's distinctive contribution. The other lesson that is taught by its performance is the familiar fact of successful political dynamics that one thing leads to several others—which some people are inclined to interpret too easily at the moment as meaning that one thing must lead to everything else. It is not true that the new style of mutual interference in the domestic affairs of friendly states implies, if it is successful, that all national separateness will ultimately be abolished. The method can either be employed by maximalists, like those who created the European Common Market, or by organisations with much more modest ambitions. It could, for instance, be used by a reinforced United Nations to keep the peace more effectively than it is able to do so long as it is bound by the old-fashioned doctrine that international authority can be asserted without impinging, sometimes quite sharply, on the domestic concerns of nation-states.

The more immediate question, with which this article is primarily concerned, is whether the Americans are prepared for the inconvenient effects on their own domestic politics of the new method of doing business inside the proposed "concrete partnership" between western Europe and the United States. Why single out the Americans? Because the six founder-members of the European Community have already been put to the test—they have successfully operated the technique of mutual interference for the past five years—and the British Government, if not the British people, had before the breakdown in Brussels accepted the awkward impact of this technique on certain cherished national institutions, *e.g.*, in limiting the sovereignty of Parliament. It is not just that the Americans have not considered the matter closely; it is in fact doubtful whether their institutions, in anything like their present form, could be readily adapted to the new requirements.

Although the US President has a great deal more personal power than the head of a government usually possesses in Europe, his ability to commit his Government to any given line of domestic policy is much more limited. The apparent contradiction arises from the fact that the concentration of the whole authority of the cabinet in one person—all cabinet ministers being personal appointments of the President are removable at his personal will—has induced Congress to limit the power of the central executive as such. In some ways it would be easier for the President to act if he were surrounded by a cabinet of powerful political figures with roots in the electorate, for once these men had been convinced, they could be held responsible for mobilising the necessary political pressure to carry the collective policy through the legislature. As it is, they have no more status than that of personal servants of the President, and the constitutional principle of the separation of powers denies them a place in Congress. The whole American system still bears the strong imprint of the original model which guided the efforts of the Founding Fathers—the model of a group of states each independently controlling all phases of its domestic life, but agreeing to transfer collective power over the defence of their frontiers and the initiative in relations with foreign states to one man at the centre of the union. Even in external affairs they were not prepared to give him untrammelled power: he is supposed to act only on the "advice and consent" of the Senate, which, as Professor Beloff has pointed out,[1] was conceived as a committee of ambassadors from the states of the union with a watching brief over the President.

THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY has moved towards union from precisely the opposite end of the compass. It has set out a programme

[1] Max Beloff, *The American Federal Government.* O.U.P. (1959).

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which involves the transfer of power to the centre over an increasing area of domestic affairs in the economic and social field, but leaves intact the rights of the member-states to conduct their own separate defence and foreign policy.[2] This is not to say that the Europeans do not intend to move towards common external policies. But the history of the attempt made so far in the committee on political union set up by the Six[3] has shown how unwilling the larger European nations are to surrender any effective power over foreign policy to a European organisation. It is, in any case, quite clear that another treaty separate from the Treaty of Rome will have to be negotiated, if external policies are to be subjected to any form of common control or consultation. The European officials in Brussels have long realised that the Treaty of Rome is no help at all in this matter. That is because it is concerned with an entirely different set of operations.

THE PRINCIPLE WHICH UNDERLIES the growth of the power of the European Commission in Brussels is the need for a policy which will not only be collective but also coherent. By choosing to attack the most powerful instruments for protecting the various national economies, starting with the tariff on goods imported from member countries, the Community was signalling not a return to *laissez-faire* but the urgent need to set up new European institutions which would safeguard people's welfare at least as efficiently as the discarded instruments of national policy. Coherence demands, for instance, that measures designed to raise living standards by giving more freedom for businesses to produce and sell within the European Common Market shall not be offset by increased unemployment. It follows that nations which have taken the risk of losing trade and opportunities for employment in some industries must be assured that they will have real scope for gains in other industries.[4] This means, among other things, that they must reach agreement on concerted measures to achieve a large and steady expansion of economic activity and living standards. The European Commission last October spelt out some of the implications of this commitment in a far-reaching programme for the rest of the 1960s. They included measures to co-ordinate national budgets so that taxes in different countries work in unison, to bring the central banks together in a committee which will develop joint policies on interest rates and loans, and the promise of a common long-term policy on the employment of labour, on wages, and on prices. Plainly, such a programme makes sense only on the assumption that each member-state already has a reliable machine which is capable of governing national economic policy. The problem of achieving coherence on a wider international scale is primarily to adapt the existing machines so that they mesh with one another.

THE DIFFICULTY in applying any similar arrangement to the United States is that the control often just is not there. How does one machine mesh with another whose movements cannot be predicted? Take an innocent-looking thing like the American suggestion that the United States together with Europe should agree on a sensible farm policy, so that expensive agricultural surpluses are kept down and the barriers to trade in cheap food (produced by the Americans) are reduced. This is in fact a key issue because the Americans have threatened that they will not make any concessions on industrial goods in the tariff negotiations under the Trade Expansion Act, unless the Europeans dismantle some of the agricultural protection which keeps U.S. produce out of their markets. Straightaway such an arrangement would expose the support price guaranteed to American farmers in the Middle West as a subject for international decision. Otherwise how could the German or French farmers be assured that any competitive gain made by American exports at their expense is not the result of some discreet subsidy? The next stage comes with the discovery that to curb agricultural surpluses you must sooner or later impose direct production controls. Policing what farmers are up to is always difficult; aerial inspection is one of the means used. The Europeans will also want to have a say in the original decision about how

[2] The only surrender of sovereignty in the field of external relations is the transfer to the European Community (at the end of the transition period, in 1970) of the right to make commercial treaties with states outside the Common Market.

[3] The Committee was originally under the chairmanship of M. Fouchet in 1961 and then of Signor Cattani, but has been effectively in abeyance since the spring of 1962.

[4] The point was given forcible expression by the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Schroeder, in the spring of 1963 *against* the French who were demanding that all the European Economic Community's efforts be concentrated on the one issue which interested them—agriculture. Schroeder told the French that they would not get their way unless they were prepared to start making concessions on a big package deal, including a tariff bargain with the United States and an arrangement for consultation between the EEC and Britain. It is indeed precisely this principle of the big package—the source of so much of the special motive power of the Community in the past—that has been responsible for holding up further progress in 1963.

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much of each product American farms are to be allowed to produce and sell on the world market.

But the fact is that no US President has yet shown any signs of being able to control the embattled and competing interest groups which dominate American agriculture. It is on this kind of issue that an Atlantic partnership aiming at a coherent, as well as a collective, policy is bound to experience severe frictions. Farmers are of course difficult to control anywhere, and there are occasions in all countries when governments are unable to make good on promises that they have given. But there is at least a system of administration in European countries which makes such promises credible. Otherwise there would be no point at all in the enormous efforts made by the European Common Market to agree on a joint agricultural policy.

JUST BECAUSE the President of the United States can on his own initiative mobilise thousands of troops at short notice and reinforce the American garrison in Europe, we tend to overestimate his strength in many other fields where Europeans take the exercise of government power for granted. There is one statistic which suggests, very roughly, the extent of the curb on this power, where it relies on getting laws made to support a policy. The latest score of the President's successes in the 87th session of Congress, lasting until autumn 1962, is given as 44·3 per cent. of government bills and requests for legislation passed by Congress (*Congressional Record*, Autumn 1962). Scoring less than half is by no means unusual; President Kennedy's percentage was estimated to be about in line with the average Presidential performance.

But it is not solely a matter of the President's ineffectiveness in getting the legislation that he needs. More important still is the incoherence that has been deliberately imported into the heart of the administrative process. There are altogether over eighty different Government departments and agencies which report direct to the President of the United States. They are not grouped in any hierarchy which would permit the President to restrict his dealings to a smaller number of intermediaries who would report from and carry back the Government's decisions to the agency chiefs. Each of them has the right of access to the man at the top and is determined to use it. It is almost inconceivable that a coherent policy could emerge out of an administrative welter of this kind. Its effect under any but the strongest President is to turn the offices of the Government into a loose confederation of more or less hostile bodies competing with one another for more money and more power.

The competition for money is perhaps the one salutary aspect of the situation. It means that the agencies are constantly forced to refer to the Bureau of the Budget for permission to spend more. The Budget Bureau has, indeed, over recent years come to be the chief instrument for the co-ordination of government available to the President. It is not only the sole authority for the spending of money; it has also been given the job of formulating the whole of the government's legislative programme for each session of Congress. In theory this task is merely one of bringing together the bits and pieces of legislation proposed by all the various government departments and then presenting the result in a tidy form to the President for his approval. This is in line with the fiction that the Director of the Budget Bureau is a rather subordinate member of the Government apparatus, without even a place in the cabinet. (Franklin Roosevelt himself was sufficiently caught up in this illusion of the "non-political" character of the Budget Bureau to offer at one stage to make the Director a career civil servant appointment.) In fact, the job of "legislative reference" performed by the Director, when he decides which Bills shall take precedence in the queue of government business and which shall go to the bottom or be left out altogether, is the closest that any American minister gets to the power exercised by the Leader of the House of Commons in Britain. The difference is that in America he still has to wait on the pleasure of the Chairman of the Rules Committee before a government bill is allowed to go before Congress and be voted on. The Budget Director also has some of the power that normally goes with the head of the civil service; he is supposed to ensure that official business gets done and to sort out jurisdictional disputes about the boundaries of authority between competing government agencies. However it is freely admitted inside the Bureau of the Budget in Washington that it is much easier to work out the most complex legislative programme than to compel a couple of Government departments with overlapping spheres of influence to agree on which of them shall do what.

THIS SPIRIT OF unrestrained departmental independence is at first sight surprising, in a system where all cabinet officers are appointed by the President and are directly dependent on his personal goodwill. They are unable to achieve anything comparable to the parliamentary power of a powerful British minister, for example. The separation of powers in the American system ensures that a dismissed

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minister cannot use Congress either as a court of appeal or as a weapon for harrying the Government. Yet ministers and their departments in Britain are much less given to the kind of bravura which is commonplace in Washington. Partly no doubt this is the result of the sheer number of separate departments and agencies in the US administration and the absence of any clear hierarchy of administrative power—such as the arrangement in Britain which puts the Treasury on top, as the department responsible for civil service establishments. But probably a more potent factor still is the state of mind in Washington: no one is surprised by, indeed everyone expects a show of vigorous independence on the part of individual Government departments and agencies. The British idea that the Government suffers great loss of face if one department says something which might be interpreted as contradicting the views of another department is alien to American thinking.

WHERE DOES the President stand in this process? One authority, Professor Arthur S. Miller,[5] asserts that the President's role is essentially that of a "decision-broker." His main job is to bring people with different views together, to juggle with conflicting interests and constantly to find possible areas of compromise on desirable courses of action. Somewhat surprisingly, Professor Miller picks out Franklin Roosevelt as a prime example of a President who was a successful "decision-broker." However this does not mean that Roosevelt failed to pursue a policy of his own; the point is only that he recognised severe limitations on his ability to establish a coherent system of Government. One of the methods that he employed, when he failed to persuade a Government agency to go along with him, was to set up a new agency of Government with a lot of new officials in it, and then to arrange matters so that the threads of power somehow bypassed the recalcitrant office. It seems a long way round to have to go, and one hardly sees President Kennedy to-day relishing a similar manoeuvre. But the significance of Roosevelt's action was that he adapted himself to the essential pluralism of American government. The Presidency is only one among several independent centres of power. Right from the start, the Constitution cut up the power of the government into several separate pieces—state and federal power, legislature, executive, judiciary—and put a large *"Keep Out"* notice on each. In these circumstances the task of the matchmaker in the government is both an honourable and an important one.

Of course the President's office has enormous authority and prestige. In the last resort a determined President like Kennedy can browbeat an independent and defiant subject into submission—as he showed when he forced the US Steel Corporation to reverse the increase in its prices in 1962. But there is a wide area of government activity where the President's moral authority is not sufficient to ensure that he will get his own way. The most striking example of all is the sphere of government covered by the Federal Agencies, which regulate a host of basic economic activities including railroads, oil and electric power, air travel and shipping, radio and television. It is worth looking at these agencies more closely, since they tell one a great deal about the atmosphere in which the American administration conducts its affairs, and about the obstacles that will have to be overcome before this conduct can be converted into a set of coherent policies.

THE SYSTEM ORIGINATED with the belated effort to assert the public interest in the management and the fixing of rates on the American railroads in the 1880s. Congress was loth to hand this power over to the Department of the Interior, which had up till then been responsible for railway matters, because this would have strengthened the power of the executive and ultimately of the President.[6] On the other hand, Congress realised that it could not itself directly hand down the stream of decisions which would be necessary to ensure the effective supervision of the railways. It therefore set up in 1887 an independent executive agency, the Inter-State Commerce Commission, which was not subject to any government department or indeed to the President's own orders. This was regarded as a triumph for the legislature in its constant struggle to curb the power of the central government, which as all right-thinking people have known from the Founding Fathers onwards, is an ever-present menace to the freedom of the individual citizen. Since government regulations could not be prevented from growing, in view of the way that private enterprise in railways impinged on the public interest, the best solution was to break it up. It was a new variety of the traditional pluralist formula: if you can't lick it, atomise it.

[5] *Private Governments and the Constitution* (Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1959).

[6] The President of the day, Grover Cleveland, happened to be a former railroad lawyer. See Mark S. Massel, *"The Regulatory Process,"* in *Administrative Regulation* (Duke University, Spring 1961), to which I am indebted for much of what follows on the subject of the regulatory agencies.

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Moreover the legislators came to see the independent Federal Agency as a special instrument for the assertion of its own power—an "arm of Congress," it was called, inside the executive. The formula was used increasingly during the twentieth century as the range of activities which had to be regulated or promoted by the Federal Government widened—banking and credit through the Federal Reserve Board, business practices through the Federal Trade Commission, the stock exchange through the Securities and Exchange Commission, right through to the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission after the last war. In fact the decision whether to place some new governmental activity inside an existing department under the control of the President or whether to float it off in a separate agency was pretty haphazard. However it was necessary to create some doctrine which would provide the theoretical framework for this curiously separate piece of government. One of the things which all the agencies appeared to have in common was that they interfered, more or less, with private business. They could be treated as a set of regrettable exceptions to the principle of *laissez-faire* capitalism—itself, in the traditional American myth, the guarantor of the freedom of the individual from oppression by the government. Here was the justification for picking out this one sphere of activity for Congress's special attention.

Nor was this all. Because the typical work of the Federal Agency involved it in relations which could either help or hinder private enterprise—sometimes make or break it[7]—its primary role was thought to be a judicial one. Characteristically, its function as an instrument of positive government, which ought at its best to secure the public good with the minimum of friction, was underplayed; all the emphasis was on its appearance in the guise of a judge between competing private interests. Professor M. H. Bernstein sums up the historical process which led to this curious device as follows: "The inability to come to terms with the political character of regulation has been glorified as an honourable escape from politics, and it has sanctified the drive towards further judicialisation of administrative regulation."

The judicial rot, once it set in, went deep. In the praiseworthy attempt to form a consistent policy for the regulatory agencies, the reformers have tried to isolate and heighten the judicial element in the process. More and more the trend has been to hive off the "judges" (who are usually the most senior people) from the rest of the staff, whose business is to promulgate administrative laws governing the activities which fall within the agency's responsibility. For example, the five Commissioners who are in charge of the Federal Trade Commission are not allowed to consult their own staff of economists and accountants when they are reviewing a case. This is because their impartiality as judges might be reduced through receiving advice from someone engaged in the formulation of long-term policy for the government.

The result of this kind of attitude is that the people with ultimate authority in the field of policy tend to abdicate it to the junior officials, in order to keep their own minds clear and their hearts pure for the vital judicial process. Like some tireless primitive organism exclusively concerned with reproduction, these agencies divide themselves again into yet more parts, each with an independent body and soul. It has to be understood that in the American context, it is the judicial role which attracts high public esteem. Lesser people merely make policy—and, if they value a quiet life, they make as little of it as possible, at any rate overtly. For once a Federal Agency lays down a general rule governing some activity which it is supposed to supervise, Congress is tempted to question it. It is after all a piece of rival legislation. But so long as the agencies stick to the business of case-by-case judgment, the legislators will not so easily feel that they have the right to argue about the outcome of a judicial ritual.

THUS A LARGE SLICE of American government is farmed out in pieces to a number of individuals who neither know nor are expected to care about the long-range purposes of the President and his administration. It is the principle of *anti-planning* deliberately elevated into a way of life.

For it is not the independent federal agencies alone which indulge in this riotous pluralism; their aims and ideals pervade the whole system of American government. Each Bureau within a government department aims to secure the maximum freedom of manoeuvre, and generally thinks of itself as being connected with the cabinet minister who is officially in charge only by the loosest rein. Some of the subordinate offices of government, like the Bureau of Land Reclamation (Department of the Interior) or the Corps of Engineers (Army), are notorious for the way in which they have built up their autonomous power by peddling their influence outside and inside Congress. A mere cabinet minister would think twice before ordering them to perform some action which conflicted with

[7] *E.g.* Mark S. Massel estimates that "A television licence in a town of moderate size can be worth between $3 and $4 million." No payment is made for this franchise.

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the ideas of the Bureau chief. Each Bureau takes pains to organise its own "constituency" of people who are dependent on its goodwill and interested in maintaining its independent power. The civil contractors behind the Bureau of Land Reclamation, for example, are known to be an extremely formidable lot with an extensive influence in Congress. They could, if they were crossed, make life very awkward for a minister when he came on the unavoidable trip to Capitol Hill to ask a Congressional Committee for the means of getting on with some task. There is no secret made about the process of mutual back-scratching; it is accepted in Washington as the natural way of life of a society where power is dispersed. Chairmen of powerful Congressional Committees will make it quite clear to a high officer of state appointed by the President that he will not get his way on *A* unless he makes a deal on *B*, even though it has no apparent connection with the case.

Bargaining is the essence of government. So everyone tries to have something to bargain with. Autonomy inside and influence outside the executive are recognised as the two main instruments. It is regarded as quite normal for a subordinate organ of government to seek to strengthen both. Congress for its part encourages the process openly: it is its special contribution in the fight against "Big Government." Thus the budget of a department is broken down and allocated in advance to the subordinate Bureaus; the heads of these Bureaus are then asked to come before the Congressional Committees and justify their claims for funds or explain how the money already spent has been used.

This constant stimulus to rivalry is applied to the armed forces too, and shows up in competition for funds between different branches of the same Service—*e.g.*, in the Navy Department between the sailors in the Bureau of Ships (BuShips) and the airmen in the Bureau of Aeronautics (BuAer) over a project like the Polaris missile. The backers of the Polaris missile, when they started on the project in 1956, wisely decided to bypass these jurisdictional disputes by setting up an entirely new office, the Special Projects Office, inside the Navy Department with the right to draw people in from any arm of the Service. Only in this way was it possible to overcome the natural inertia of government departments, which have been graphically described as "holding companies" for a number of bureaus with diverse interests. As Samuel Huntington puts it: "The Services become holding companies serving a variety of purposes rather than integrated companies devoted to a unifying goal."[8]

Congress is constantly seeking new levers of power to insert in the hidden interstices of government. One such device which has proved especially efficient is the ruling, which Congress imposed on President Truman in 1949, that the individual members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were to be empowered to speak to any Congressional Committee freely in their own personal capacity, without any commitment to the official line of policy adopted by the Government. Since the members of the JCS are put there with the expectation that they will represent the interests, as well as express the expertise, of each of the armed Services, it starts off by being a forum for bargaining. Congress was able to ensure that the bargaining would not be confined within the walls of the Defense Department, but would be extended into a richer and more dramatic argument on Capitol Hill. Until President Kennedy brought Robert McNamara on the scene as Secretary of Defense, this arrangement provided much aid and comfort to each of the Services in their struggle to counter any threat of a co-ordinated U.S. defence policy.

Often the only way in which the Government can get an urgent job done is by creating yet another bureau or agency, free from the complicated feuds and alliances which absorb the energies of the existing ones and make them unresponsive to the President's will. This is the apotheosis of government by bureaucratic fission. But it works—at any rate for a time.

The Special Projects Office established in the Navy Department managed to push Polaris into production three years before its originally scheduled date. Another spectacular example of the success of this method was the Economic Cooperation Administration set up in the late 1940s to run the Marshall Aid Programme for Europe. Mr. Paul Hoffman, who was the first head of the Programme and carried it through its crucial years, once told me that it was only possible to do the job because, starting with a clean slate, he had complete freedom to hire and fire and to work out a new set of administrative procedures appropriate to the task in hand. The system does give the American who is lucky enough to acquire a position of power in a brand-new agency scope for the exercise of administration as a form of personal virtuosity in a way that is rarely, if ever, given any government official in Europe. That the opportunity is capable of producing extraordinary results will be confirmed by anyone who watched the Americans closely during the early stages of the Marshall Plan for Europe. But of course the *tabula rasa* as a principle of administration may

[8] *The Common Defense: Strategic Programmes in National Politics* (New York, 1961).

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just as easily produce muddle as imaginative innovation. Success often depends on creating a special kind of atmosphere of "crisis government". One such device for establishing this atmosphere was the ruling laid down for all of the people employed on Polaris in the Navy Department that they must come in to work on all Saturday mornings, while the rest of Washington went free.

THE TROUBLE with crises is that even the best-managed ones begin sooner or later to peter out.

The Foreign Aid Programme, for instance, becomes a routine, tedious, and often frustrating job in obscure places, instead of an eleventh-hour rescue operation in Europe. In the end the government in Washington finds itself with one more agency on its hands, protected by its *clientèle* of dependent interest groups and their allies in Congress. Its object, like the object of every other agency and bureau, is to be left in peace to live its own life with the minimum interference from busybodies in the office of the chief executive. There are altogether some 350 bureaus scattered about in various departments of government. They are manned by the ablest professional civil servants. Typically the career official makes for a bureau and sticks there, whereas the highest positions in the big government departments—which would be held by permanent secretaries and under-secretaries in Britain—are political appointments. The bosses of the bureaus usually have long years of experience in Washington and know how to pick their way among the many hidden centres of power, both in Congress and in the executive branch of government. Typically they hold on to their appointments for long periods. By contrast, the senior officials appointed by the President to head the government departments are "the transient amateurs who are often incapable of exerting firm control over the professional bureaucracy."[9]

CONTRARY TO WHAT MIGHT have been expected, therefore, it is the professional civil servants rather than the political appointees who are chiefly responsible for the atomisation of government. Perhaps this might be remedied if the career civil servants were allowed to penetrate right to the top of government departments, instead of being generally confined to subordinate offices. They would then have some incentive, as well as more effective power, to control one another.

It is worth noticing that the effect of the Eisenhower régime from 1953 onwards was to convert many jobs which had become career civil servant posts into political appointments. This was partly because of a general belief among the incoming Republicans, after twenty years out of office, that the civil service had been manned by a kind of Democratic time-bomb which was set to explode in their faces. Eisenhower brought in a firm of business consultants (McKinsey, who had done a good job in reorganising Shell, among other great corporations) to advise the government on how many official posts ought to be filled by political appointees. They came up with the figure of 3,000—though rather fewer than 2,000 of these were actually filled, in view of the dearth of applicants with the right qualifications. The change-round when the Democrats returned to Washington under Kennedy in 1961 was much less drastic. Moreover many of the President's political appointments were former professional civil servants, who had left the government during the Eisenhower régime. It is perhaps significant that in the one moderately effective instrument of co-ordination in the U.S. Government, the Bureau of the Budget, everyone except the head, who has a highly political task, is a career civil servant.

Is there any reason to believe that handing the American government machine over to professional civil servants would by itself change the situation? The root of the problem is the Congressional assumption that the normal relationship between legislature and executive is a state of permanent war. Congressional Committees insist on the right to question individual government officials right down the line and to fight with them about the minutiæ of their office routine. But a convention has grown up that even though a non-political career official must be prepared to give expert evidence, the brunt of any serious battle over the work of a government department will always be borne by the political appointee. Indeed, the latter is regarded by the ordinary career civil servant as a necessary shield against Congressional attack. The career men also sometimes make use of another weapon—their special relationship with the professional staff who work for the Congressional Committees. This professional nexus, once again typically at the level of bureau chiefs, bypasses both the political executive and the members of Congress.

ONE INSTINCTIVELY contrasts all this with its nearest opposite—the British system of government, with its neat division be-

[9] *The Job of the Federal Executive* by Marver H. Bernstein—a report on the findings of a study group composed of senior government servants, organised by the Brookings Institution (1958).

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tween politicians and civil service and its disciplined blocks of parliamentarians, either supporting or harrying the chief executive. But as soon as one examines the contrast in any depth, it is hard not to feel a pang of envy for the Americans.

A Congressional Committee in Washington makes one realise how much of the democratic process of control we have forgone for the sake of our tidiness. The U.S. system at its best makes it possible for the country's elected representatives to find out what is really going on inside the the machine of government. It is a machine whose power in every country in the West is increasing day by day; but the public that is governed by it is rarely given any insight into how these processes of government really function and produce the decisions which affect their daily lives. The British Parliament sticks religiously to the myth that a minister is personally responsible for all the acts of his department, that the civil servants with a vast and constantly increasing area of administrative discretion have no will of their own, except as arms of the minister, and that therefore it would be wrong to ask them to account for anything that they have done in the course of governing the country. (The one exception is the Public Accounts Committee which is permitted to question the heads of departments, but no one below them, about how the money voted by Parliament was actually spent.)

It would of course explode the myth that all acts of government emanate from Parliament, through the minister of the Crown whose appointment is sustained by the Parliamentary majority, if it were once admitted that decisions affecting the livelihood or the interests of the citizen were being taken on the say-so of an individual exercising discretionary power, merely because some other civil servant had decided he should be employed in a particular office. Surely representative government fails in its purpose if it is not possible for Parliament to reach such a person and to find out how a wrong or questionable decision within his competence came to be made. The hierarchical theory of government which answers—"Yes, do so by all means... but address your inquiries to the minister at the top who is responsible for good order in his department"—is a trick. If Parliament really wants to carry out its task as the overseer of government, it must be enabled to examine not only acts of government in the abstract, but also the people who actually make the decisions that things will be done one way rather than another.

THIS IS PRECISELY what the American Congressional Committee is able to do. It is true that this power is sometimes abused and is often employed in an arbitrary manner, which shows neither sympathy nor regard for the inherent problems of an administrator with a busy life and high responsibility. But at its best the American technique does provide the opportunities for public awareness of important decisions of government that are made elsewhere behind the façade of Parliament. The apparatus is formidable. There are forty Committees of Congress and many more sub-committees, each lavishly equipped with funds and professional staff, working away at this task. The big fish do not easily slip through a net with that number of strands.

Watching a British Parliamentary Committee at work after this, one cannot fail to be depressed by an atmosphere which seems to be a cross between collective do-it-yourself and poor-house. The minister in charge of the bill being considered by the committee can, it is true, command all the expertise of the civil servants of his own department and of others who may be sent in to assist him. But the committee members who belong to the Opposition, and indeed the non-ministerial M.P.s belonging to the government party, are given no help at all, other than a share of the part-time services of a couple of overworked House of Commons clerks. There is not even a collection of the basic literature on the subject of the committee's work provided for each member at the start; and members sometimes have to compete with each other for the single copy of a crucial document that the House of Commons Library manages to rustle up.

Compare this with the standard allowance of up to $10,000 a year to pay the salary of a consultant which is the right of every member of a U.S. Senate committee.

Poorly serviced with information, devoid of professional help other than what the members can scrape together from the voluntary efforts of well-wishers outside, denied the right to carry its investigation into the bureaucracy itself, the British Parliamentary Committee, whether it is considering a proposed new law or inquiring into some other matter, is a poor simulacrum of effective legislative control over the executive arm of government. Is it any wonder that there is a certain arrogance in Whitehall—a polite kind of arrogance, it is true, careful not to advertise the profound indifference towards public opinion felt by the high official who knows that there is no way in which the public can touch him? It is a standing temptation, which is not always resisted, to come to regard the public interest as his private fief. Yet when anyone questions whether the present system provides a reliable check on the possibility of abuse of administrative power, there is massive resistance

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to reform. So great is the zeal of ministers that one might conclude that the politicians were being retained by the civil service, and ought to declare their interest.

THE STAND-PAT attitude was given characteristic expression once again recently by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Dilhorne, in his brusque rejection of some careful and moderate proposals for reform made by a Committee of "Justice", the lawyers' organisation, under the chairmanship of Sir John Whyatt, formerly Chief Justice of Singapore.[10] The Committee had suggested the appointment of a "Parliamentary Commissioner", on the lines of the Scandinavian *Ombudsman,* who would examine complaints of maladministration against government departments—though initially only complaints submitted to him by Members of Parliament—and would be subject, before embarking on any inquiries inside the civil service, to the veto of the minister concerned. After waiting a year for the government's reaction, the reforms were discussed by Lord Dilhorne in the following terms:

> The Government . . . believe . . . that the appointment of a Parliamentary Commissioner would seriously interfere with the prompt and efficient dispatch of public business. In the Government's view there is already adequate provision under our constitutional and Parliamentary practice for the redress of any genuine complaint of maladministration.[11]

It should be observed that the main point of criticism made by the Whyatt Report was that the existing procedure for dealing with complaints of maladministration (question time and adjournment debates) always allowed the minister and his department to be judges in their own cause—unless there was a major public scandal which resulted in a judicial inquiry. The Lord Chancellor did not even feel it necessary to deal with this point. Nor did the Opposition peers in the House of Lords bother to raise it.

The view which British administrators have successfully propagated is that any extension of Parliamentary control over their doings would somehow at once reproduce over here the worst weaknesses of the American administrative system. But the truth is, as we have seen, that whereas the British system suffers from the monistic myth—one people making one Parliament from which all acts of government derive—the Americans disrupt the administrative process by their relentless pursuit of unlimited pluralism in government.

To reform the British system and adapt it to the requirements of 20th-century democracy would, I suspect, be a comparatively straightforward task. But to bring the disparate and warring elements which make up the American government together into a coherent whole is a much more difficult task—as well as one which is far more urgent for the future of the western world. A sovereign parliament is, after all, built in order to get its own way, once it is determined to do so. A President, in a system based on the separation of powers, is only supposed to get his own way when he has succeeded in persuading a lot of other people who have a powerful interest in asserting their independence of his commands.

But there are some procedural eccentricities in the American system impeding efficient government which seem to owe their continued existence to nothing more than the obstinacy of a few old men in Congress and the inertia of habit. This is how President Kennedy described the process:[12]

> "It is very easy to defeat a bill in the Congress. It is much more difficult to pass one. . . . Go through a Committee, say the Ways and Means Committee of the House, sub-committee, and get a majority vote—the full committee and get a majority vote—to the Rules Committee and get a rule, go to the floor of the House and get a majority, start over again in the Senate, sub-committee and full committee, and in the Senate there is unlimited debate so you can never bring a matter to a vote if there is enough determination on the part of the opponents, even if they are a minority. . . . Then unanimously get a conference between the House and Senate to adjust the bill, or if one member objects, to have it go back through the Rules Committee, back through the Congress. . . ."

Even if the Administration does finally get its way, the whole process of government is slowed down by the delay in the legislative process. A new session of Congress cannot take up an unfinished piece of legislation just where the last session left off. It must start all over again.

It is not only the legislative work of government that is held up in this way; ministers and senior officials have to leave their offices and dance attendance on the Committee chairmen if they want the legislation to go through. It is the chairmen of Committees who largely determine the atmosphere in which relations between the legislature and the executive are conducted. Some chairmen expect to be consulted about any even moderately important executive decision

[10] *The Citizen and the Administration: The Redress of Grievances.* (1961).

[11] *Hansard, House of Lords,* 8 November 1962, col. 384–5.

[12] In a television interview on December 17th, 1962.

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in the Bureaus and Agencies subject to their goodwill; indeed they behave towards the government officials concerned with some of the assumed authority of a minister of the Crown in the British system. The difference is that the committee chairman generally stays in his position much longer than the minister, has far more detailed knowledge of the government office under his surveillance, and absolutely no responsibility for its success or failure.

This is a system of government by busybody. There is no restraint on the chairman's officiousness; the junior members of a committee rarely presume to question the actions of a man who seems to be accorded the kind of respect given to a pirate chief by a gang of freebooters operating in hostile waters.

As a result of the seniority rule, which means that the chairmanship goes to the member of the majority party who has the longest *unbroken* period in Congress, the Committees are dominated by old men with safe seats. Even when they belong to the President's party, they frequently show indifference and sometimes active hostility to the policies of the Government.

The most spectacular victory of a Congressman over the Administration during the 1962 session was the successful fight put up by the Democratic chairman of a committee of the House of Representatives, Mr. Otto Passman, to secure a savage cut in the Foreign Aid Bill. In spite of the President's personal intervention, Mr. Passman succeeded in reducing the appropriation by nearly $1 billion—the biggest cut ever in a Foreign Aid Bill. He did not conceal his satisfaction. The unremitting struggle between legislature and executive in the American system is personified by the crotchetty old men who make it a point of honour to be out of sympathy with the very business of government, to insist on having it proved to them each time afresh that it is not of its nature an otiose activity. They are often impressively expert in matters of detail—Mr. Passman certainly knew a great many figures—but there is much less concern for or understanding of the issues of policy. The government is especially dependent on such understanding from the chairman of the Rules Committee, which is responsible for deciding which Bills are to be allowed to come up for debate in Congress at what time. If the chairman of the Rules Committee happens to be hostile or indifferent to the President's policy, he can do a lot of damage to the legislative programme. The seniority principle produces its worst results during periods when public opinion, reflected in the choice of new men as elected representatives, is on the move. This has been happening in the last two Congressional elections in both parties. At such times, the only people with absolutely safe seats, immune from the electoral changes which affect lesser conservatives, are the extreme reactionaries in the Southern States whose constituents are immobilised by their total absorption in an archaic quarrel. Change in the rest of the country thus may serve merely to reinforce the power of the extreme right wing.

The usual answer to criticism of the seniority rule is: "Yes, we know it produces some terrible people—but is there any other way of appointing your Committee chairmen without a wrangle?" In any other country the answer would be obvious. The parliamentary party would be responsible for choosing these men. This would mean that the leader of the majority party would ensure that the chairmen of Committees were not wholly out of sympathy with the government's policy. But parties do not work like that in the United States. Once again the federal principle turns each party into a broad coalition of disparate local interests which are as likely as not to be divided sharply on any given piece of national legislation.

Indeed the absence of party discipline in the sense that it is understood in European politics is probably the biggest single factor impeding the American President from engaging in "positive government" in the manner of other western nations to-day. If he is asked to commit himself to an international agreement involving government intervention in domestic affairs, of the type that has become familiar in the European Economic Community, he will be unable to offer a reasonable assurance that he will be supported on any projected piece of legislation by a majority of his country's elected representatives. In these matters he is permanently in a position similar to that of a weak European prime minister on the eve of an uncertain election.

Is there any way in which the President could convert the theory which makes him the official leader of his party into a political reality? At first sight it seems surprising that his power of patronage does not allow him to impose some discipline on recalcitrant party politicians. President Kennedy has explained why it does not: "There are not many jobs. They are filled in the first months. Most of those jobs belong to the members of the Congress, anyway. So patronage is not a factor. . . ."

When the President said that the jobs "belong" to Congressmen, he presumably meant that there is a convention that these appointments are made by the local party bosses,

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instead of by the official head of the party. This reflects the realities of American party organisation which operates chiefly at State and local level, but barely at all at the centre. The national party is used to fight a Presidential election campaign and for little else. But there is no self-evident reason why national parties of the kind which exist in all the other Western democracies should permanently be excluded from the United States. Indeed it is clear that the existing party structures which coagulated a hundred years ago are no longer appropriate for the tasks in hand.

One possibility is that the successful pursuit of Negro enfranchisement by the present Democratic Administration will in the end both break up the alliance with the conservative Southern Democrats and reinforce the ideological content of the party by bringing in the mass support of new Negro voters intent on a programme of active reform over a wide area. That would create the conditions out of which an effective national party machine might emerge.

Perhaps the most powerful aid to party discipline would come from the establishment of party campaign funds, controlled from the centre and available to help approved candidates in Congressional elections. Election costs are enormous, and there is already a problem about becoming a candidate for the Presidency without being a millionaire. Both parties may ultimately decide that they need permanent finance on a much larger scale than they have had hitherto; and this could provide the seed-ground from which a more powerful party organisation might emerge at the centre.

But there is no cause to expect these things to happen either easily or soon. In the meanwhile the Americans will, it seems, have to continue to struggle along with a system of government which can respond quickly enough to a clear-cut emergency, but is readily responsive to little else. Perhaps it is the absence of any major public issue that is felt to require a long-term solution—other than the issue of the military contest with the Soviet world where it is felt that the President as commander-in-chief has sufficient means at his disposal—which accounts for the lack of interest in the United States in the problem.

Everyone who knows anything about the way the government works knows that there is an urgent need for reform. Yet no one in Washington or in the universities and institutes which pour out their closely reasoned, carefully documented, and profoundly damning accounts of the mechanics of the central government seems to feel confident that reform of anything but the wilder eccentricities of procedure is likely to be carried through.

THE REAL PROBLEM is a theory of government as just another variety of the competitive process; and this is a doctrine which is deeply ingrained in the American spirit. The reformers themselves are also somewhat inhibited by the realisation that the U.S. system, with all its inefficiencies as an instrument of coherent administrative policy, is nevertheless responsive over a wide range of activity to the pressures of popular democracy, in a manner that no other nation has yet achieved.

And behind all this one occasionally detects the comfortable notion that western Europe is, in any case, growing more and more like the United States of America, so that in the long run it will become progressively easier to do business between the two. The purpose of this report is to suggest that it isn't and it won't.

Difficulties of a Revisionist

All day fighting for a poem. Fighting against what?
And for what? What, being its own danger, wants
to get rescued, but from its rescuer?

So many voices. So much silence. The air, thickened,
reeks of tobacco, hints of blood; still the thing
gibbering somewhere takes no hints at all.

Up the road in the rain someone stopping a car asks
the way to the next estate. I find myself
giving instructions that will get him lost.

Christopher Middleton

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Onwards from Spencer

Evolution and Evolutionism — By P. B. MEDAWAR

I HESITATED some little while before accepting Oxford's invitation to deliver this year's Herbert Spencer Lecture. My conscience told me that I could not honourably accept unless I were prepared to steep myself in the work and thought of Spencer himself, an enterprise not to be lightly undertaken. For Spencer was a System Philosopher, one who endeavoured—these are Whitehead's words—"to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted."[1] And his System was set forth in twelve volumes thicker and squarer than Gibbon's, each bound in a cloth which has acquired with age a reptilian colour and texture, so putting one in mind of some great extinct monster of philosophic learning.

The prospect did not beckon me on; nor was I cheered up by finding myself the first man ever to have read the two volumes of the *Principles of Biology* acquired by the Royal Society's library more than half-a-century beforehand. But when I began to read I knew that the challenge was not to be resisted. I began to understand why in his lifetime Herbert Spencer's works had sold in tens of thousands. The *Study of Sociology* at 10s. 6d. had sold more than 20,000 copies by 1900, and the cheap edition of his tract on *Education* nearly 50,000—and these, it should be remembered, lay outside his formal *System of Synthetic Philosophy*. The System comprised the Principles of Sociology, and of Psychology, Biology, and Ethics, the whole knit together by a volume of *First Principles*, "primordial truths" arrived at by deduction from "the elementary datum of consciousness." What a tremendous undertaking! And what a formidable man Spencer was! His energy was apparently equal to any exertion; his thought had a steady pounding forward motion along the lines he had laid down for it in the famous manifesto or prospectus that preceded the first edition of the *First Principles*.

I think Spencer was the greatest of those who have attempted to found a metaphysical system on naturalistic principles. It is out of date, of course, this style of thought; it is Steam Philosophy; and until a few years ago we should have been tempted to describe it as out of date in content also. Evidently it is not. Spencer's greatest contribution to philosophy was his Theory of General Evolution, which I shall expound in a moment, and in recent years his ideas have come back to life, or been propped upright again, in the work of men as far apart as Julian Huxley and Father Teilhard de Chardin,[2] to say nothing of the revival of evolutionary sociology and social anthropology. I intend it to be a compliment to both parties when I say that Huxley's thought about evolution is in the same general style as Spencer's. Teilhard, on the contrary, was in no serious sense a thinker. He had about him that innocence which makes it easy to understand why the forger of the Piltdown skull should have chosen Teilhard to be the discoverer of its canine tooth.[3]

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (Cambridge, 1929).

[2] See *The Phenomenon of Man* (London, 1959).

[3] On August 30th, 1913. The whole story is to be found in *The Earliest Englishman* by A. S. Woodward (London, 1948); see also Charles Dawson and A. S. Woodward, *Quart J. Geol. Soc. London*, 70, pp. 82–99, 1914. See also my critical notice on Teilhard in *Mind* (January, 1961).

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NOW WHAT I PROPOSE to do is to show that the principle of general evolution is not an important principle, and that abstractions arrived at in the way this one was arrived at have the property of sounding as if they were tremendously "significant" without actually being so. I then turn to a much more important problem arising directly out of Spencer's evolutionism, namely the difficulty he felt obscurely (and others have since felt very clearly) of reconciling a Law of General Evolution with another universal law which pronounces for a general decay of order and a great levelling of energy, and declares that the direction of the flow of natural events is always towards what Willard Gibbs called *mixedupness*. I shall try to identify the various misunderstandings which have led to the belief that living organisms circumvent or actually break this Second Law of Thermodynamics, and shall then argue that the equation of biological order or organisation with thermodynamic order, and so in turn with information content and the idea of improbability, is one that cannot be sustained.

To show that I have no grudge against evolution as such, and that I accept the Laws of Thermodynamics in the spirit in which Carlyle's lady correspondent accepted the Universe ("Madam, you'd better!"), I emphasise that I shall say nothing about the principle of General Evolution that I would not be prepared to say about any other attempt to pass off a mere inductive *collage* as a work of philosophic art.

Consider, for example, a great new universal Principle of Complementarity,[4] according to which there is an essential inner similarity in the relationships that hold between antigen and antibody, male and female, electropositive and electronegative, thesis and antithesis, and so on. These pairs have indeed a certain "matching oppositeness" in common, but that is *all* they have in common. The similarity between them is not the taxonomic key to some other deeper affinity, and our recognising its existence marks the end not the beginning of a train of thought. The several manifestations of complementarity are so completely different in origin, nature, and import that the properties of the one pair teach us nothing at all about the properties of any other. The most we can learn is to be prepared to recognise the relationship if it should turn up in a new and unfamiliar context. The idea of complementarity has, for example, never been far from the thoughts of those who have tried to find out how two chromosomes come to be formed where there was only one before; and for the biologist the quintessential example of complementarity is indeed the relationship between the twin strands of the molecule of deoxyribonucleic acid, "DNA".

SPENCER was the first great evolutionist, and he gave the word *evolution* its modern connotation in English. His first account of the matter is in "The Development Hypothesis,"[5] a (for Spencer) relaxed and fairly chatty argument that appeared in *The Leader* between 1852 and 1854; that is, seven years before the publication of the *Origin of Species*, and when Spencer himself was in his early thirties. In it Spencer asks why people find it so very difficult to suppose "that by any series of changes a protozoon should ever become a mammal" while an equally wonderful process of evolution, the development of an adult organism from a mere egg, stares them in the face. We can tell from the tone of his article that evolution was already an idea widely discussed by people of philosophic tastes.

As his thought developed Spencer came to think of genetic evolution, evolution in Darwin's sense, as no more than one manifestation of a far grander and more pervasive process; and out of this conviction his System grew. To-day we realise that philosophers devise Systems because it gives them a nice warm comfortable feeling inside; it is something done primarily for their benefit, not for ours. Spencer would not have taken kindly to such an interpretation. Nor did he admit that his concept of evolution was shaped by an empirical knowledge of its particular instances. On the contrary: Spencer, like Whitehead after him, the last of the great system philosophers, undertook "the deduction of scientific concepts from the simplest elements of our perceptual knowledge."[6] *First Principles* was an attempt to do just this: to show that the concept of general evolution followed "inevitably" from laws of the indestructibility of matter and of the conservation of energy. Spencer's argument is unimportant and unconvincing, its sole purpose being to justify his expectation of finding evolution at work everywhere. The Universe evolved, and the solar system and earth within it. Animals and plants evolve generation by generation, and within any one generation development is itself an evolution. Society is an organism and society evolves. Moreover, "the law of evolution holds of the inner world as it does of the outer world." Mind evolves; and language and musical expression, the plastic arts and the arts of narrative and dancing, all display one characteristic or another of evolutionary change. Evolution is "a univer-

[4] Not to be confused with Niels Bohr's.

[5] Reprinted in *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative* (London, 1868).

[6] *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* (Cambridge, 1919).

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sal process of things." And when we contemplate it as a whole, in its "astronomic, geologic, biologic, psychologic, sociologic, etc," manifestations,

> we see at once that there are not several kinds of Evolution having certain traits in common, but one Evolution going on everywhere after the same manner.... So understood, Evolution becomes not one in principle only but one in fact."[7]

These larger ideas, I should explain, grew upon Spencer during the latter part of his life. I am quoting from the last edition of *First Principles*; they are not to be found in the first edition of 1862.

WHAT THEN WAS this universal law of the transformation of matter and energy? He picked his way towards a definition or description that satisfied him, but even after forty years he was wanting to polish and qualify it still. What he has to say about definition itself, the process of defining, is an example of his splendid good sense and of his powerful, hideous prose—the writing of a man who, lacking and perhaps also repudiating any of the graces of writing, is absolutely determined to be understood:

> A preliminary conception, indefinite but comprehensive, is needful as an introduction to a definite conception. A complex idea is not communicable directly, by giving one after another its component parts in their finished forms; since if no outline pre-exists in the mind of the recipient these component parts will not be rightly combined. Much labour has to be gone through which would have been saved had a general notion, however cloudy, been conveyed before the distinct and detailed delineation was commenced.

The point is commonplace nowadays, but many scientists still persist in the belief that no rational discourse is possible unless one "defines one's terms."

In the outcome, Spencer's definition, as it is to be found in the final revise of *First Principles*, ran thus:

> Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.

At once he goes on to say, and we love him for it:

> NOTE.—Only at the last moment, when this sheet is ready for press and all the rest of the volume is standing in type... have I perceived that the above formula should be slightly modified... by introduction of the word "relatively" before each of its antithetical clauses.

What his Principle of General Evolution amounts to is this: that the direction of the flow of events in the Universe is from simple to complex, diffuse to integrated, incoherent to coherent, independent to interdependent, undifferentiated to differentiated; from homogeneous and uniform to heterogeneous and multiform; and from an abundance and confusion of motion to a regimentation and loss of motion. These are mostly Spencer's own words. He does not speak of a passage from randomness to orderliness, or from more probable to less probable configurations of matter; but if these antitheses had been put to him, I have not the least doubt he would have said that they, too, would help to define the sign or trend of evolution.

LET US NOW study the principle of general evolution in its biological contexts to see if it actually works.

When used without further qualification, the word "evolution" is generally taken to mean evolution in the genetic or Darwinian sense. Provided we confine ourselves to comparisons between grown-up organisms, evolution of this sort answers to Spencer's definition pretty well: there is indeed a passage from simple to complex and towards a differentiation and mutual dependence of parts. But Spencer's formulation fails to cope with the problem of defining the sense in which a frog's egg (or a very young frog) is more highly evolved than, say, a grown-up earthworm. Indeed, Spencer's conception of development (which I shall deal with in a moment) leaves it open to us to suppose that embryos are *less* highly evolved than the adult forms of their own ancestors. This difficulty disappears if we take the view that evolution in the genetic sense is an evolution of developmental programmes—or, more exactly, is a systematic secular change in the character of the genetic instructions that constitute the programme of development. (The change often involves an increase of complexity and degree of detail, though not necessarily and not always.) The genetic instructions that govern the development of a frog are chemically encoded in the chromosomes in the frog's egg, and are its claim to be considered a more highly evolved object than an earthworm of any age.

But this leads to a paradox. Development itself is the golden example of an evolutionary process as Spencer conceived it to be. His thoughts constantly recurred to the evolution of tree from seed and of infant from germinal vesicle (that is, egg). Unfortunately, development cannot be

[7] *First Principles* (6th Edition, revised 1900), § 188.

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described as an evolution in the one essential sense in which genetic evolution can be so described. I have just said that to get round the difficulty of being obliged to think an embryonic frog less highly evolved than an adult earthworm we should think of an evolution of earthworm-making instructions into instructions for making frogs. Development is the carrying out of these instructions; it is a film that sticks faithfully to the book—an evolution, then, only in the sense of a translation, spelling out or "mapping" of one kind of complexity into another kind of complexity. The adult is "implicit" in the egg in the sense that one day it will be possible, after determining certain parameters, to read off the constitutional properties of the adult animal from a detailed knowledge of the chemical structure of the egg it arose from. Nothing of the sort applies to genetical evolution, however, for there is no useful sense in which the structure of a mammal is implicit in the structure of a protozoon.

I CANNOT MAKE UP my mind whether Spencer grasped this point or not. As early as 1852, in *The Development Hypothesis*, he wrote:

> The infant is so complex in structure that a cyclopædia is needed to describe its constituent parts. The germinal vesicle is so simple that it may be defined in a line.

Forty-five years of reflection must have confirmed him in this opinion, for the same sentences occur word for word in the first volume of the revised edition of *The Principles of Biology*. Yet in that same volume, grappling with the problem of how a peacock's tail comes to acquire its elaborate pattern, he made a rudimentary attempt to estimate what would now be called the amount of "information" that must be present in a peacock's egg to specify the pattern of one feather of the adult's tail. By erroneous reasoning[8] he came to the conclusion that 480,000 Weismannian "determinants" would be required to specify the pattern of one feather alone. No wonder he declared that the "organising process transcends conception. It is not enough to say we cannot know it; we must say that we cannot even conceive it." (To describe as "inconceivable" what he himself could not conceive was one of Spencer's little weaknesses.) However that may be, I think it must be clear that in describing both development and phylogenetic transformation as processes of "evolution" we may be making a useful statement about one or about the other; but not, I fear, about both. They are altogether different phenomena.

Biologists who use English as a scientific language *never* use the word evolution to describe the processes of growth and development. (In France the usage is different.) They refrain because to do so would be confusing and misleading.

NO SUCH SCRUPLES WEIGH, alas, with biologists who speak about "social evolution" or "psycho-social evolution." So far as I can make out from the writings of its various advocates, this super-organic evolution, as Spencer called it, has many manifestations, of which I shall mention only three, and discuss only the third. They are: (1) the Spencerian evolution of social organisation and of social institutions like governments, joint stock companies, banks, and so on (this was what Spencer himself was mainly concerned with). (2) What A. J. Lotka[9] called the "exosomatic" (as opposed to ordinary or "endosomatic") evolution of new sensory organs like spectacles, ear-trumpets, and ultra-violet spectrophotometers, or new motor organs like cutlery and guns. Spencer had some pointed and sensible remarks to make about evolution of this kind in his *Principles of Psychology*. These first two kinds of super-organic evolution are, of course, the consequences of a third. (3) Cultural or psycho-social evolution, the secular accumulation of fact and fancy, knowledge and know-how, rules and rites, that is mediated through tradition.

By "tradition" I mean "the transfer of information through non-genetic channels from one generation to the next."[10] I discussed psycho-social evolution at some length in the last of my Reith Lectures,[11] and tried to explain in just what sense psycho-social evolution represents a fundamentally new biological stratagem. But although psycho-social evolution is immensely important, it is also immensely obvious. Spencer did not ration himself austerely where explanations and examples were called for, but of the changes caused by the prodigious secular growth of the arts and sciences he says only "the proposition is familiar and admitted by all. It is enough simply to point to this great phenomenon as one of the many forms of evolution we are tracing out."[12] He spent much more time, unfortunately, in trying to demonstrate that the

[8] See *The Principles of Biology* (Revised Edition, 1898), pp. 372–373. The computation is not possible even with the evidence now available to us; but if we were to attempt it we should certainly not assume that the individual elements of the pattern behaved as "independent variables."

[9] *Human Biol. 17:* 167 (1945).

[10] *The Uniqueness of the Individual* (London, 1957), p. 141.

[11] *The Future of Man* (London, 1960).

[12] *The Principles of Psychology* (4th Edition, 1899), Vol. 1, § 158.

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exercise of the mind had a direct hereditary effect on the capabilities of the brain in later generations. Perhaps this is why he believed in the inevitability of progress; for if his interpretation were true, social evolution would be cumulative and virtually irreversible.

We know better: that we are all born into the Old Stone Age and in principle could stay there.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL EVOLUTION differs from ordinary genetic evolution in three important ways: it is not mediated through genetic agencies; it is reversible, in the sense that what it has gained can in principle be wholly lost, and in one generation; and it is an evolution in the Lamarckian style, in the sense that a father's particular knowledge and skills and understanding can indeed be transmitted to his son, though not (as Spencer supposed) through genetic pathways. Common sense suggests that differences of this magnitude should be acknowledged by a distinction of terminology. The use of the word "evolution" for psycho-social change is not a natural usage, but an artificial usage adopted by theorists with an axe to grind. If by any chance it *had* been a natural usage, people like myself on occasions like this would have said over and over again how wrong-headed it was, and how wise we should be to abandon it.

All who think about psycho-social "evolution" agree that its inception marks a second great epoch of biological history. But I wonder: is it a second, or is it perhaps a third? The first must surely have been an evolution at the chemical or molecular level of integration—a process of which we can have no direct knowledge, for in a certain important sense all chemical evolution in living organisms stopped millions of years before even our faintest and most distant records of life began. So far as I know, no new *kind* of chemical compound has come into being over a period of evolution that began long before animals became differentiated from plants. Nor has there been any increase of chemical complexity; no chemically definable substance in any higher organism, for example, is more complex than a bacterial endotoxin. I have no views on the processes of evolution that brought new kinds of chemical compound into existence, but I should not be surprised to find them very different from the forms of evolution that have been in progress since.

The point I wish to make is that evolution since those primordial days has been an evolution of structure at a higher level of integration than the chemical (using the word "chemical" in the way it is used by chemists). It was these thoughts that led me to the discussion that now follows on the relationship between biological and thermodynamic order.

THE 16TH CHAPTER—in effect the last—of the first edition of *First Principles* contains an argument on the phenomenon of equilibration from which Spencer ultimately drew

> a warrant for the belief, that Evolution can end only in the establishment of the greatest perfection and the most complete happiness.

This sentence cannot be found in the latest version of *First Principles*. Its place is taken by some sombre and, I must also say, rather confused reflections upon the ultimate state of the Universe: for Spencer now enlarges and develops an argument of which, in the first edition, we see only the embryonic rudiments—an argument tending to the conclusion that unless something unforeseen and unforeseeable turns up, all things must "beyond doubt" tend towards a universal quiescence, an "omnipresent death." What can have been responsible for the much greater weight he gave in his later thought to the phenomena of dissipation and dissolution?

The theory of General Evolution was first hinted at in Spencer's *Development Hypothesis* of 1852. One year before, in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Edinburgh,[13] Lord Kelvin (then Professor William Thomson) called attention to and elaborated upon some "remarkable conclusions" arrived at by Clausius and Rankine after studying the properties of "thermodynamic engines," engines that translate heat into mechanical work. The First Law of Thermodynamics (though not then so described) had already brought the reassuring news that heat, as a form of energy, could not be lost, for the total quantity of energy in the universe remained constant, no matter what its transformations. But though not lost to the universe, it now became certain that heat was "irrecoverably lost to man, and therefore 'wasted', though not *annihilated*" in thermodynamic transactions; for (Thomson went on to say) "it is impossible, by means of inanimate material agency, to derive mechanical effect from any portion of matter by cooling it below the temperature of the coldest of the surrounding objects." The conversion of heat into mechanical work depends on inequalities of temperature within the system, and these inequalities are progressively done away with in a great and universal process of levelling up.

Like the principle of General Evolution, this Second Law of Thermodynamics was in due course taken out of its native environment, here the pithead and the railway workshop, and generalised. And just as Spencer had tried to abstract the essentials from every concrete mani-

[13] Vol. 20 (1851), pp. 261–288.

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festation of evolution, so it has been possible to discern the working of a principle parental to the Second Law of Thermodynamics wherever energy is transformed.

With the growth of the science of statistical mechanics, it became possible to translate the Second Law into a statement about the history of a system of particles whose behaviour was known in the aggregate only, not individually. This historical statement declares that, in an isolated system, the pattern of the distribution of the elements within it passes from order towards randomness, from separatedness to mixedupness, from less probable towards more probable configurations. Our sense of the fitness of things tells us that something is being lost in the process—orderliness, perhaps, or availability of energy or thermodynamic competence—but the historical origins of the concept still persuade us to speak of a gain of something, of *entropy*, a quantity which, in its native context, is a simple ratio expressing the degree to which thermal energy is no longer available for the execution of mechanical work. *"Die Entropie strebt einem Maximum zu"* was Clausius' own formulation of the Second Law.

THE MOST RECENT CONTEXT for the general law of the decay of order and increase of entropy is in the theory of communication. A message encoded in symbols (for example, a Morse signal) owes its specificity, its property of being *this* message and not that message, to the particular configuration of the symbols, and a random or disorderly configuration of symbols does not make sense. The information capacity of a system of communication obviously depends on the range of different configurations of symbols at the command of the transmitting agent. In a sense, therefore, information capacity is a measure of order or, by a natural extension of the idea, of improbability; information capacity is thus analogous to negative entropy, and may be measured in formally similar terms. This formal similarity has led some people to declare that information *is* negative entropy, but the usage strikes me as perverse. There is much the same formal similarity between the equations for the diffusion of heat and for the diffusion of solutes, but (as I think Hogben somewhere remarked) we nevertheless resist the temptation to refer to heat as a caloric fluid. "Information," said Professor Norbert Wiener, in a passage more than usually full of negative entropy, "is information, not matter or energy." Elsewhere he points out that the concepts of information and of *pattern* are not coextensive: information is a concept normally (if not necessarily) applied to patterns which are spread out or must be read out in a series, in practice a time series.[14] Such is the case with the information in a gramophone or tape record and also, so it now appears, in a chromosome. The order matters.

BY THE END of the 19th century the philosopher could choose between alternative doctrines of world transformation, the one apparently contradicting the other. The principle of General Evolution spoke of a secular increase of order, coherence, regularity, improbability, etc., and Spencer's own derivation made it appear to follow logically from physical first principles; while the Second Law of Thermodynamics, suitably generalised, spoke of a secular decay of order and dissipation of energy.

There can be no doubt that Spencer's thought took on a darker complexion in later years for what are ultimately thermodynamic reasons; but such was the prestige of evolution theory that the Second Law of Thermodynamics was over and over again described as a Law of Evolution, sometimes as *the* law of evolution. A. J. Lotka, the greatest of modern demographers, upheld this interpretation and applied it to biological evolution,[15] but to most people biological evolution and increase of entropy seem mutually contradictory ideas. "Evolution," says Julian Huxley,[16] who can be spokesman for all who have thought likewise, "is an anti-entropic process, running counter to the Second Law of Thermodynamics with its degradation of energy and its tendency to uniformity." François Meyer[17] speaks of a principle of Anti-chance at work among living things.

In fact the two concepts are not antithetical. That they are popularly supposed to contradict each other is due partly to a fairly obvious misunderstanding about the physical situations in which the two generalisations hold good and make sense, and partly to a more subtle and correspondingly less obvious confusion of language.

[14] *Cybernetics* (New York, 1948), p. 156, and *The Human Use of Human Beings* (London, 1950), p. 21.

[15] *The Elements of Physical Biology* (Baltimore, 1925). Lotka chose to regard evolution as the change undergone by the *total* system "organisms + environment" conceived as an isolated system (or rather as a closed system with a known input of radiant energy). Conceived thus, the evolving system certainly obeys the second law, and there is much to be said for Lotka's viewpoint. But if we use the word "evolution" to describe this general transformation, we shall have to invent another word to stand for evolution in its more usual biological sense.

[16] In his *Introduction* to Teilhard de Chardin's *Phenomenon of Man*.

[17] *Problématique de l'évolution* (Paris, 1954).

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Spencer himself, not unexpectedly, was unable to work the problem out; for this reason the final, revised edition of *First Principles* is much less satisfactory than the first, in which his thoughts were still untroubled by the ideas of universal mixing-up and running-down that grew out of the work of Boltzmann and Willard Gibbs. Spencer at all times believed that evolution had a natural limit, and came to an end when a certain state of equilibrium was reached, as he believed it always must be—for "all terrestrial changes are incidents in the course of cosmic equilibration." His arguments are not very clear because the equilibrium he refers to seems sometimes to mean a state of quiescence and rest, and at other times a steady state in which evolution and its exact opposite, Dissolution, just cancel each other out. But Dissolution eventually supervenes and the universe ends in a ruin of order. Evolution may start up again locally, and perhaps evolution and dissolution may alternate, but the matter must be left open since it is "beyond the reach of human intelligence." Spencer's answer seems to have reconciled the laws of evolution and of thermodynamics by supposing them to mark not incompatible but successive episodes in a history of world order. But this will clearly not do, and we must seek other more convincing interpretations.

IF WE CONFINE OURSELVES merely to considerations of energetics, there is no problem; or at least, there is no confusion. The Second Law of Thermodynamics applies to isolated systems, systems in which there is no external trade in matter or energy; the law in no wise excludes the existence of sub-domains in which entropy may be decreasing,[18] though necessarily at the cost of a disproportionate increase of entropy elsewhere. The answer that has satisfied most physicists is that living organisms, thermodynamically *open* systems, are just such domains. They have been described as "privileged domains," and this sounds well; though the corollary, that the rest of the system is underprivileged, sounds rather silly. But if we contemplate the overall transformations of matter and energy within the biological system as a whole, as Lotka did, then of course nothing happens to contravene the Second Law.

A biologist might still protest that, while living organisms obey the letter of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, they fail to observe it in the spirit. I should now therefore like to make a very hasty and perhaps superficial attempt to clarify some of the real confusions of thought and language that underlie the entire argument. The confusions are genuine, even if my own interpretations are not exact.

I SPOKE a moment ago about the possibility of a grand abstract equivalence between, on the one hand, entropy, randomness, probability, and nonsense; and on the other hand between thermodynamic order, "order" as a biologist might use that word, improbability, and information content. Each of these concepts or pairs of antitheses has been applied, sometimes critically, more often recklessly, to the description of living organisms. Let us therefore consider the sense, if any (1) of regarding biological order as a form of thermodynamic order; (2) of describing organisms in evolution or in everyday life as seats or centres of improbability or Anti-chance; and (3) of using the concepts and terminology of information theory to describe biological organisation. If these correspondences or equivalences should be found faulty then the antithesis between evolution and entropy, using both words in their widest senses, will disappear; for it will turn out that they refer to different properties pertaining to different physical situations.

1. FIRST, THEN, thermodynamic order and biological order or structural organisation. So far as I can make out all physicists who have considered the matter virtually equate the two, though Eddington[19] had some misgivings. Erwin Schrödinger, in his remarkable little book *What Is Life?* (1944), says that living organisms maintain and add to their state of order by, in effect, feeding on negative entropy; by "drinking orderliness from the environment"—or, to put it more temperately, by breaking down molecules coming from outside the system to pay the thermodynamic bill for synthesising molecules within the system. Schrödinger explicitly defines "order" in the language of energetics, equating it to what was later to be called information capacity.

There must surely be a misunderstanding here.[20] Order or organisation as the biologist understands it means complex regularity, with the extra connotation of stability. By "regularity" I do not mean symmetry or periodicity; I mean rather "tidiness" or regimentation in the sense that each element of the system has its

[18] *E.g.*, in a refrigerator, a heat engine in reverse in which heat flows from a colder to a warmer environment to increase the temperature of the latter. Needless to say the flow is far from spontaneous. See A. R. Ubbelohde: *Man and Energy* (Penguin Books, 1963).

[19] *New Pathways in Science* (Cambridge, 1935).

[20] See Dr. Joseph Needham's searching and thoughtful analysis in his essay on "Evolution and Thermodynamics" in *Time the Refreshing River* (London, 1943).

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proper place. Order of this kind is by no means confined to the living world: it is the orderliness of a crystal, of a molecule, or in general of the solid state. Increase of complex regularity may accompany a decline of free energy; for example, in the combination between gaseous hydrogen and oxygen to form molecules of water, which are more highly "organised" in the biological meaning of the word than the parent molecules; or, again, in the phenomena of polymerisation and crystallisation. Organisms would go very hungry if they lived on biological orderliness as such. At a molecular level, biological orderliness is above all to be found in the giant polymeric molecules that convey and execute specific instructions—polynucleotides, polypeptides, and polysaccharides, and their combinations one with another and with lipids. Their depolymerisation is not accompanied by anything very spectacular in the way of energy-changes; our stomachs do not get red hot when we digest a meal, though the alimentary canal is a slaughterhouse of biological order. Willard Gibbs said entropy was "mixedupness"; biological order is not, or not merely, unmixedupness.[20]

2. Probability. Biologists in certain moods are apt to say that organisms are madly improbable objects or that evolution is a device for generating high degrees of improbability; I have already referred to M. Meyer's views on the workings of a principle of anti-chance. This is entirely in keeping with the idea that evolution generates negative entropy, because for more than fifty years now the Second Law of Thermodynamics has been said to declare that the spontaneous motion of all natural events is from less probable to more probable states.

I do not know that anything follows from the idea that the direction of evolution is towards improbability, and I am uneasy about it for the following reason. Everyone will concede that in the game of whist or bridge any one particular hand is just as unlikely to turn up as any other. If I pick up and inspect a particular hand and then declare myself utterly amazed that such a hand should have been dealt to me, considering the fantastic odds against it, I shall be told by those who have steeped themselves in mathematical reasoning that its improbability cannot be measured retrospectively, but only against a prior expectation. Name a hand before the deal, I shall be told, and then everyone will be suitably taken aback if it turns up.

For much the same reason it seems profitless to me to speak of natural selection "generating improbability." When we speak, as Spencer was the first to do, of the Survival of the Fittest, we are being wise after the event: what is fit or not fit is so described on the basis of a retrospective judgment. It is silly to profess to be thunderstruck by the evolution of organism *A* if we should have been just as thunderstruck by a turn of events that had led to the evolution of *B* or *C* instead. The hollowness of the pretence that biologists should spend their time marvelling at the improbability of evolutionary change is shown up by artificial selection, a sieving process in which we ourselves determine the properties of the sieve. The sieve will retain some elements and exclude others, for such is the nature of sieves; the outcome of sieving is therefore a highly probable one, if not certain. If I expose a culture of staphylococci to a certain concentration of penicillin, I *expect* (that is, I attach a high probability to) the evolution of a strain resistant to penicillin. Any other outcome would be improbable and would require a special explanation.

It is not only in their evolution but in their growth and persistence from day to day that organisms have been said to be wildly improbable phenomena. By this is meant, I suppose, that if all the ingredients of the world or the solar system were to be shaken up in a dice box of divine dimensions, the emergence from it of a configuration like an earthworm would be most improbable. How very true! But in the physical circumstances that actually prevail, the growth and maintenance of an organism is the most probable outcome of the events it is taking part in. When I eat a meal, for example, I expect part of it to turn into more of myself. In particular, I shall expect some of it to turn into the chemical substance characteristic of my own blood group, group B. So very highly probable is it that substance B will be formed that a court of law would discountenance the possibility of my manufacturing a certain amount of blood group substance A—though substances A and B are almost identical physically and chemically.

Similarly, if I spark a mixture of gaseous hydrogen and oxygen, the most probable consequence is the formation of water, though (as I have suggested) water is a more highly "organised" substance, as the biologist uses that word, than the elements out of which it was compounded. What *may* be said, I think, is that the conjunction of circumstances of which the formation of water is the most probable outcome is itself very improbable—I mean, the coming together of gaseous oxygen and hydrogen and the application of a spark to the mixture. The same applies to the conjunction of events of which the formation of More Organism is the most probable outcome: a good deal of the actual business of living consists in

[20] See *footnote previous page.*

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bringing about these improbable conjunctions, and organisms pay heavily for it in energy.

3. FINALLY, "INFORMATION." The ideas and terminology of information theory would not have caught on as they have done unless they were serving some very useful purpose. It seems to me that they are highly appropriate in their proper context, where we have to do with storing information or sending messages; chromosomes, for example, convey from one generation to the next a message about how development is to proceed. But I feel we have to be on our guard against the train of thought that runs "negative entropy—thermodynamic order—biological organisation—information capacity"; on our guard, that is to say, against treating information content as a measure of biological organisation. If it were indeed so then, as Waddington has pointed out,[21] we should be obliged to infer that complexity or degree of organisation increased very little in biological development. For development, at all events when it occurs in a nearly closed system, is, from the standpoint of information theory, merely a verbose and repetitious spelling out or re-formulation of the information embodied in the chromosomes. This is not a helpful description of development.

IN MY OPINION the audacious attempt to reveal a formal equivalence between the ideas of biological organisation and of thermodynamic order, non-randomness, and information must be judged to have failed. While it professes to give a general account of everything that is entailed by the antithesis between order and disorder, it has in fact failed to give any adequate account of order in its most interesting and important form, that which is represented by the complex functional and structural integration of living organisms. One great difficulty, I feel, is that there has been a hopeless attempt to comprehend within one theoretical declaration, (a) a theory of order, an entirely abstract idea which can be expounded in a mathematical or logical language making no reference to particular concrete instances; and (b) the empirically founded notion that entropy increases or that evolution occurs, and so on.

Should we not rather say that, in biology, the concepts of entropy and thermodynamic order are appropriate when we are dealing with problems of energetics; of information theory when we are studying how messages are sent and acted upon; and of probability where we are dealing with phenomena that have a random element, as in predicting the outcome of breeding experiments? In our moods of abstract theorisation we tend to forget how great and how diverse are the functional commitments of biological macromolecules. They insulate, they fill out; they fetch and carry; they prevent the organism as a whole from falling apart or from dissolving in water; they prop up, they protect; they attack and defend; they store energy and catalyse its transfer; they store information and convey messages, and sometimes they themselves *are* messages. The successful prosecution of all these activities depends upon properties more complex and more particular than can be written down in the language of energetics or information theory.

WHERE A CONSORTIUM of brilliant and imaginative theorists has failed, so far, to provide us with the right theoretical equipment for studying biological organisation, it is not to be wondered at that Herbert Spencer, working pretty well single-handed, failed too. His System of General Evolution does not really work, we know; the evolution of society and of the solar system are different phenomena, and the one teaches us nothing about the other. Development, on the one hand, and the secular transformations of species on the other hand, are both evolutionary processes, but in senses so different that to describe one as an "evolution" makes it imperative to find some different word to describe the other.

But for all that I for one can still see his System as a great adventure, and now that I know my way about those thick square volumes I do not feel I am taking leave of them for good.

[21] "Architecture and information in cellular differentiation," in *The Cell and the Organism*, eds. J. A. Ramsay and V. B. Wigglesworth (Cambridge, 1961). For discussions of information theory in biology, see *Information Theory in Biology*, ed. H. Quastler (Illinois, 1953); *The Physical Foundation of Biology*, by W. M. Elsasser (New York, 1958).

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POETRY

In Search of the Lost Language

By Hans Magnus Enzensberger

LITERARY HISTORIANS have worries which the rest of us are not plagued by, and one of the most awkward questions they have to answer is when one period ends and the next begins. There has been endless controversy over the problem of the date on which realism was born. But the closer the historian gets to his own present, the more painful becomes his dilemma. The question when did modern, or indeed contemporary, literature begin can bring a professor (and particularly a German professor) to despair. As a rule he will get out of the difficulty, as is the custom in England, by calling to his aid a date from dynastic or political history—undoubtedly with a bad conscience, since wars and revolutions, coronations and massacres, take place without consideration for the poets of the day and their work.

This harmless worry does not exist for present-day German poetry. In this case the recourse to history is, for once, quite correct. In Germany 1933 and 1945 are not merely dates of political history. These years are total, like the régime whose dominion they mark. During these twelve years German literature of more than parochial significance existed only outside the frontiers of Germany: among the émigrés.

It is not easy for anyone to picture the state in which the country found itself in spring 1945. It was so unprecedented that even the inhabitants can now scarcely give an account of it; French, Italian, or British history knows no parallel to it. Photographs bear witness to the physical devastation of the cities. Less easy to grasp is the destruction which Hitlerism left behind in the German *Bewusstsein*. This destruction was prepared over a long period and carried out methodically, not to say conscientiously. The best brains among the German intelligentsia already left the country in 1933. By the end of the 'thirties the intellectual quarantine was almost complete. Provincialism had assumed murderous proportions. Germany resembled a gigantic Albania.

The mental state of a people is nowhere mirrored more exactly and mercilessly than in its language, and during those twelve years the German language was debauched in an unheard of manner. Long before the first bombs fell it lay in ruins. In the mouths of the holders of power and their helpers even apparently simple and innocuous words—like *Raum* (space), *Heimat* (homeland), *Boden* (soil), *Blut* (blood), *Ehre* (honour), *Schulung* (training), *Pflicht* (duty), *Vorsehung* (providence), *Opfer* (sacrifice), *Zucht* (discipline)—were so corrupted that they still bear the stigma, and have become unusable. In 1945 three German publicists brought out a book in which they attempted to analyse this process in relation to a few dozen examples (Dolf Sternberger, Gerhard Storz, and W. E. Süskind: *Aus dem Wörterbuch des Unmenschen*). This vocabulary could have been multiplied a hundredfold and would still have remained incomplete, for it was not only in the official jargon of the Hitler party that the German language was thus destroyed and distorted. The process was no more purely external than Fascism itself; it attacked colloquial speech, the domain of slang and argot. At the beginning of the 'forties an expression entered into so-called *Landserdeutsch* or soldier's slang that can still be heard to-day in the snack-bars and stadia of Berlin and Frankfurt. If someone drinks or runs here to the point of exhaustion, to the limits of the possible, he is said to drink or run *bis zur Vergasung* ("till he's gassed"). The expression is employed without any inhibition and with no provocative intent; it is used, so to speak, un-

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consciously, although everyone in Germany knows (and perhaps already knew in 1943) what "gassed" meant in Dachau and Auschwitz.

How to write poetry in a language thus distorted was a question every German poet has had to answer since 1945. Literary tradition could do no more to help them than could the public or private speech of their contemporaries. What was tradition? Certainly not what Fascism had put forward as literature. In Germany the tradition of modern literature since 1910 had for fifteen years been burned, banned, and forgotten. But even a return to the old, for example to the folk-song, seemed discredited. It had been sung to death in the bawling of the Hitler Youth and with it one of the most characteristic creations of German poetry. Altogether, the Nazis had ruthlessly altered the function of a major part of what was regarded as the "national cultural heritage," making it an alibi for barbarism, a process perhaps always inherent in the bourgeois concept of culture. The SS-officer who carried Hölderlin in his knapsack and the concentration-camp commandant who played Schubert sonatas *"nach Feierabend"* (when "off duty") were by no means legends; these were the consequences of a "life of the mind" for which the "higher values," for which *Bildung* has always been a fig leaf to cover betrayal to those in power. This is how we must understand the unqualified harshness of the verdict on all future German poetry passed after the war by the philosopher Theodor W. Adorno: to go on writing lyric poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. Whatever is expressed in poetry to-day must be able to face this judgment.

Without the premisses outlined here, post-war German poetry can be neither understood nor assessed. After the entry of the Allies, Germany was mute, in the most precise meaning of the word, a speechless country. There is a poem in which this paralysis has itself become language and which simultaneously describes and overcomes the situation: it has become famous and is regarded to-day as the birth certificate of the new German literature. Günter Eich wrote it: *Inventory.*

Dies ist meine Mütze,
dies ist mein Mantel,
hier mein Rasierzeug
im Beutel aus Leinen.

Konservenbüchse:
Mein Teller, mein Becher,
ich hab in das Weissblech
den Namen geritzt.

Dies ist mein Notizbuch,
dies meine Zeltbahn,
dies ist mein Handtuch,
dies ist mein Zwirn.

This is my cap,
this is my coat,
here is my shaving kit
in a linen bag.

A tin is my plate
my mug.
I have scratched my name
in the tinplate.

This is my notebook,
this is my groundsheet,
this is my towel,
this is my thread.

Eich's poem is as quiet as it is radical. It is written from the situation of a prisoner of war in a camp; but this situation simultaneously stood for the condition of all Germans. The poet is staking a claim to the absolute minimum that remains; to a material, spiritual, and linguistic remnant. His manner of writing corresponds to this. It is stripped down as far as poetry can be stripped. The text sounds like a man learning to speak; it is with such elementary sentences that language courses begin. This was the position of German literature after the war: it had to learn its own language.

There was no lack of interpretations of this state of affairs. The unique situation evoked countless commentaries precisely because overnight everyone could say and write whatever he liked, whatever occurred to him; indeed, during the first years of peace, since there was nothing to be earned and almost nothing to eat, discussion was the Germans' main occupation. No wonder it had a somewhat feverish and puffed-up look. The slogan that Germany had reached *"Nullpunkt,"* the zero mark, was the cliché of the day, and Germans wallowed in extravagant hopes, dreamed of a radical fresh start. Everything was to be done quite, quite differently from the way it had ever been done before. No more armaments, no more injustice and exploitation. The "younger generation" would see to that. Of course, history could not be cast off quite so easily, and it very soon turned out that the *Nullpunkt* was a chimera, that there was no escape from the past.

Least of all in literature. The same "younger generation" who proclaimed the Year Zero with noisy pathos had so far failed to produce as many as three poems still viable to-day. The moment of the inventory had quickly passed, and poetry immediately fell back upon the most traditional pattern, the only ones still current. For there was one school of versifying which Hitlerism had silently tolerated right down to the last years of the war. This was the so-called *Naturlyrik*, nature poetry, a German speciality from of old. Its historical origins lie in the Romantic movement. Via the Symbolism of the turn of the century this nature poetry infected

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a branch-line of Expressionism; as it followed this path that side of it which was in flight from history and hostile to civilisation came increasingly to the fore. Under Nazi rule its practitioners sealed themselves off entirely from contemporary history. Untouched by current events in their hide-outs, they wrote verses about snails and butterflies, quivering grasses and silvery thistles. Many people saw in these exercises a form of literary resistance; and in a totalitarian state not to join in the official caterwauling actually is enough to make one suspect.

Bertolt Brecht has described the dialectics of such an attitude once and for all in three famous lines (in the poem *An die Nachgeborenen, "To Posterity"*):

Was sind das für Zeiten, wo
ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist.
Weil es ein Schweigen über so viele Untaten einschliesst!

What times are these when a conversation
About trees is almost a crime.
Because it includes a silence about so many misdeeds!

THIS IS THE SEAMY SIDE of the German nature poem, and after the war, at the latest, this aspect became clear to everyone. Between 1945 and 1950, that is to say during five years which saw Hiroshima and the beginning of the cold war, the Nuremberg trials and the division of Germany, German poets produced books of verse whose titles in English would be as follows: *Under Tall Trees, Evening Moths, The Elderberry Flute, The Leaf Man and the Rose, Praise of Wine, The Vineyard House, Midday Wine, Lark and Sparrow-Hawk, The Bird Cabin, The Pomegranate, Blue Aconite.* An average poem from among this flood of mediocrity reads thus:

You lie as you have lain for long
Beneath ivy trailers,
Lilies bloom from lost and gone,
Roses out of memory....

Light as the passing of a moth,
O soul, you followed ever,
Only your own commands,
Obeying others never.

You soared above the silent grey
All the years just past us,
Yet your eyes of blue could still
Catch glimpses of the marvellous.

Ivy was ready for your bed,
O you now wingless wanderer,
Above it wafts the deathless breath
Of immortelles and roses.[1]

[1] Oda Schäfer, "Immortelle," from *Irdisches Geleit* (Munich, 1946).

This poem, which in German is in meticulous metre and rhyme, was written in 1946.

The prize for impudence was carried off by Werner Bergengruen, one of the most popular German authors, with the title of his collected poems. He called his book, which appeared in 1950, *Die heile Welt* ("The Sound World").

BY THEN, of course, this utterly dishonest lyric industry had had its day. It was not the loudly proclaimed "younger generation," not any youngster, who sounded its knell. Postwar German poetry, in so far as it has any claim on the attention of the world, began with two grand old men. In 1948 Gottfried Benn's *Statische Gedichte* ("Static Poems") appeared. Three years later Bertolt Brecht published his poetic work under the title *100 Gedichte.*

With this the dominion of the lyrical pixies was over. Too much has already been written about the two figures at the gateway of contemporary German poetry for there to be any need to demonstrate their stature. They are both rooted in Expressionism, among whose crucial works Benn's *Morgue* (1910) and Brecht's *Hauspostille* (1927) are numbered. In 1933 Benn had welcomed the advent of Hitler; a decision that was not reached at random and can be neither denied nor condoned. The gang quickly rewarded him by forbidding him to publish anything, and Benn retired into the "inner emigration," into his profession as a doctor and later into the Army. Brecht had left Germany in 1933 and lived in exile first in Scandinavia and later in America. Neither of them was a coward; neither of them denied his epoch. They both wrote the ruthless, wide-awake, and conscious poetry of the moderns, and each of them discovered a hitherto unknown, extremely critical and disturbing language. Here, of course, all affinity ends; for their premisses and findings, their aims and theorems were utterly contrary.

If the terms were not so threadbare and hackneyed, one might say that Benn and Brecht, the last great poet of the German Right and the first great poet of the German Left, stood one for "pure," the other for "committed" poetry. Benn did indeed see art as a purpose in itself, as an æsthetic substitute religion beyond all social and moral responsibility; Brecht did indeed act upon Marx's precept that the important thing was not to interpret the world but to change it. But such simple ideological sums rarely come out:

Vorm Parlament—das ist keineswegs Schaumschlägerei,
hat Methode wie Sanskrit oder Kernphysik,
enormes Labor: Referenten, Nachrichtendienst, Empirie,

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auch Charakter muss man durchfühlen,
im Ernst: Charakter haben die Hochgekommenen
ganz bestimmt,
nicht wegen etwaiger Prozesse,
sondern er ist ihr moralischer Sex-Appeal—
Allerdings: Was ist der Staat?
"Ein Seiendes unter Seienden,"
sagte schon Plato.
"Zwiespalt zwischen der öffentlichen
und der eigentlichen Meinung" (Keynes). Opalisieren!
Man lebt zwischen les hauts et les bas,
erst Oberpräsident, dann kleiner Balkanposten,
schliesslich Chef.
Dann ein neues Revirement,
und man geht auf seine Güter.

Leicht gesagt: verkehrte Politik.
Wann verkehrt? Heute? Nach zehn Jahren? Nach
einem Jahrhundert?

Bring the matter before Parliament—that's by no
means bunk and ballyhoo,
it has method like Sanskrit or nuclear physics,
enormous laboratories: secretaries, secret services,
Empiricism,
and don't forget character;
seriously, those who have risen to the top
definitely have characters,
not because of possible trials at law,
no, it is their moral sex appeal.
Anyhow, what is the state?
"An existent among existents,"
said Plato.
"A dichotomy between public
and private opinion" (Keynes). *Opalescence!*
One lives between les hauts et les bas,
first Lord-Lieutenant of a county, then a minor
post in the Balkans, finally chief.
Then a change in the situation
and one retires to one's estate.

It's easy to say the wrong policy.
Wrong—when? To-day? In ten years' time? In a
century?

These are a few lines by Benn: scarcely to be categorised as *poésie pure*. And again there are poems by Brecht which appear almost Chinese in their detached wisdom. Poetry refuses to be dictated to—so it may be no coincidence that in Brecht's work the direct political appeal, the bald statement of a partisan position, almost always constitute weak spots. Incomparably more solid is the political substance of many verses which do not seem to carry any intention written on their brow. The poem "Change of Wheels" (written in summer 1953, on the eve of a workers' rising in Communist Germany) is an example of Brecht's indirect political approach:

Ich sitze am Strassenhang.
Der Fahrer wechselt das Rad.
Ich bin nicht gern, wo ich herkomme.
Ich bin nicht gern, wo ich hinfahre.
Warum sehe ich den Radwechsel
mit Ungeduld?

I sit on the roadside bank.
The driver changes a wheel.
I do not like the place I have come from.
I do not like the place I am going to.
Why do I watch him changing the wheel
With impatience?

Thus, great as are the differences between them, it is quite impossible to reduce the antithesis to a formula. It was between the positions of Brecht and Benn, and in a dialogue with these poets (to whom later, and less conspicuously, other survivors of the Expressionist generation, such as Hans Arp and Nelly Sachs, were added), that the most recent German poetry developed.

THIS DEVELOPMENT began with the start of the 'fifties. The paralysis left behind by the collective shock of Nazism slowly lifted, and the pastoral babble of the nature-lyric school began to die away. It produced only two authors who still mean something to-day: Günter Eich and Karl Krolow. These most gifted and intelligent successors of the nature poets quickly freed themselves from the provincial cocoon. This change-over is signalised by Eich's *Untergrundbahn* (1949) and Krolow's *Zeichen der Welt* (1952.)

At about the same time the first new names appeared, authors who had never before published anything and hence can really represent post-war German poetry—Paul Celan, Ingeborg Bachmann, and Helmut Heissenbüttel, who published their first books in the years 1952, 1953, and 1954. Celan's most famous poem is the "Fugue of Death," which appeared in 1952. This work can, with the greatest possible poetic right, face Adorno's judgment. Here are its final lines:

Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken dich
nachts
wir trinken dich nachts der Tod ist ein Meister
aus Deutschland
wir trinken dich abends und morgens wir trinken
und trinken
der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland sein
Auge ist blau
er trifft dich mit bleierner Kugel er trifft dich
genau
ein Mann wohnt im Haus dein goldenes Haar
Margarete
er hetzt seine Rüden auf uns er schenkt uns ein
Grab in der Luft
er spielt mit den Schlangen und träumt der Tod
ist ein Meister aus Deutschland
dein goldenes Haar Margarete
dein aschenes Haar Sulamith.

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at noon death comes as a master
from Germany
we drink you at nightfall and morning we drink
you and drink you

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a master from Germany death comes with eyes
that are blue
with a bullet of lead he will hit in the mark he
will hit you
a man in the house your golden hair Margarete
he hunts us down with his dogs in the sky he
gives us a grave
he plays with the serpents and dreams death
comes as a master from Germany.
your golden hair Margarete
your ashen hair Shulamith

Crime is answered here not by proper commitment and cheap indignation, but by extreme artistic austerity. Of all post-war poets Celan was the first to recognise that in poetry as little could be achieved by opinions as by the current flight into the herbarium. Of the things to be said, the most difficult could not be said by anyone who spared himself research into language; since then Celan has carried this research to an extreme point. The title of his last book, *Sprachgitter* ("Language Grid"), indicates the path he has taken, which he has paid for with sacrifices: it leads into a solitude where the romantic aura is entirely cast aside, into the zone of a René Char, an Henri Michaux, a Gunnar Ekelöf, where all trace of hospitality and literary small talk has vanished.

I shall also quote here a poem, *Alle Tage* ("Every Day"), from Ingeborg Bachmann's first book whose title, *Die gestundete Zeit* ("The Time of Respite"), is like a landmark:

Der Krieg wird nicht mehr erklärt,
sondern fortgesetzt. Das Unerhörte
ist alltäglich geworden. Der Held
bleibt den Kämpfen fern. Der Schwache
ist in die Feuerzone gerückt.
Die Uniform des Tages ist die Geduld,
die Auszeichnung der armselige Stern
der Hoffnung über dem Herzen.

Er wird verliehen
wenn nichts mehr geschieht,
wenn das Trommelfeuer verstummt,
wenn der Feind unsichtbar geworden ist
und der Schatten ewiger Rüstung
den Himmel bedeckt.

Er wird verhliehen
für die Flucht vor den Fahnen,
für die Tapferkeit vor dem Freund,
für den Verrat unwürdiger Geheimnisse
und die Nichtachtung jeglichen Befehls.

War is not declared any more,
but simply continued. The terrible
is an everyday thing. The hero
stays far from battles. The weakling
is moved into the firing lines.
The uniform of the day is patience,
its decoration the shabby star
of hope above the heart.

It is conferred
when nothing more happens,
when the drumfire stops,
when the enemy has become invisible,
and the shadow of eternal armament
darkens the sky.

It is conferred
for the deserting of flags,
for courage in the face of friends,
for the betrayal of despicable secrets
and disregard
of all commands.

Apart from Brecht, no note like this has been struck in German poetry before. Here politics are not seen as a special field but are fused with the experience of every individual. Such writing pursues no party programme (as did the political poetry of the 'twenties); in such poems the state of society has become language—and contradiction. For the possibility thereby opened up (which in other literatures forms part of the accepted tradition of poetry) Karl Krolow coined the phrase "the public poem."

A FURTHER POSSIBILITY—it might be called poetry as the analysis of language—was discovered by Helmut Heissenbüttel. The very titles of his books, *Kombinationen* ("Combinations") and *Topographien* ("Topographies"), indicate that this author does not trust language but feels called upon to investigate its structure. Not without reason, Heissenbüttel invokes above all Gertrude Stein and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Just as Eich begins with his inventory of things, so Heissenbüttel begins with *Einfache Sätze* ("Simple Sentences"):

Während ich stehe fällt mein Schatten hin
Morgensonne entwirft die erste Zeichnung
Blühn ist ein tödliches Geschäft
ich habe mich einverstanden erklärt
ich lebe

While I stand my shadow falls
morning sun sketches the first drawing
blossoming is a deadly business
I have declared my agreement
I live

—and ends with giant syntactical molecules of the most extremely complicated construction, as in the following text entitled *Staatsbegräbnis* ("State Funeral"):

heisst etwas unterscheiden was von was und
jemanden von jemanden oder einfach nur dass
es kommt darauf an und wie macht man das
unterscheiden unterscheiden was ist oder so oder
soso oder ganz was andres Einzelheiten von
Einzelheiten Einzelleichen von Leichenhaufen
Leichen von Toten registrierte von verscharrten
und ein Staatsbegräbnis Tote und Tote und noch
ein Toter die Gestorbenen eines Jahres und die

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Todesopfer einer Katastrophe Opfer des Regimes und Vernichtungslager stückweise fuderweise und ein Staatsbegräbnis einer den jeder gekannt hat und viele die keiner keiner von denen jedenfalls aber doch gewusst nicht gewusst unbewusst unwissend sozusagen....

does to distinguish mean to distinguish what from what and someone from someone or simply that it depends and how does one distinguish distinguish what is so or so or so so or something quite different details of details individual corpses from piles of corpses corpses of the registered dead from those merely with earth scraped over them and a state funeral dead men and dead men and another dead man a year's dead and the fatal casualties of a disaster victims of the regime and extermination camps by the piece by the cartload and a state funeral one whom everybody knew and many whom none knew anyhow none of those and yet known not known unconscious unknowing so to speak....

The limits of such a method are obvious, but that does not mean that it is not worth testing. On Germany's post-war search for its lost language every path had to be tried, even against the protests of common sense and also at the risk that it might prove to be a dead end.

Simultaneously with the publications of Paul Celan, Ingeborg Bachmann, and Helmut Heissenbüttel, notice began to be taken in Germany of modern poetry from abroad. Eliot and Auden, Apollinaire and Saint-John Perse, Eluard and Char, Pound and Williams, Neruda and Ungaretti, Lorca and Yessenin were translated into German, mostly for the first time. A major part of this work of assimilation was shouldered by the poets themselves: almost all the well-known authors of the most recent German poetry have acted as guarantors for one such act of naturalisation. Towards the end of the 'fifties the time was at last ripe for the attempt to re-establish Germany's own literary tradition, which had been interrupted for twenty years. At last Trakl and Heim, Stadler and Lasker-Schüler, Van Hoddis and Lichtenstein were published and read.

With this, German poetry really existed for the first time; since the life of a literature depends entirely upon its products being contemporary and not anachronistic; in its being involved in free converse with world literature; and in its being critically aware of its own provenance and past. One is impossible without the other; without some knowledge of what went on in the outside world during the 'thirties neither the Expressionist tradition nor the modern poetry of other languages could have been apperceived. The literary consciousness of a country cannot be brought to life by extra coaching alone; one learns, as it were, only what one already knows.

By the end of the 'fifties, therefore, the situation of poetry in Germany had undergone a great change. There was no more talk of *Nullpunkt*, of "a clean sweep," "speech paralysis," and "quarantine." Anyone who now began to write and publish found that the rudiments of a public were already present, that the first steps towards a formulated theory of poetry and a critical resistance movement had already been taken. A new degree of freedom had been won, and the authors who now made their appearance—Günter Grass (1956), H. M. Enzensberger (1957), and Peter Rühmkorf (1959)—immediately made use of this latitude. Disillusionment and grotesquerie, refracted vision and parody, understatement and *humour noir*: these are some of the terms which roughly describe their poetry. Diverse as these poets may be in their methods, their convictions and temperaments, they share a common aversion to all solemn attitudinising, to the traditional pose of the poet, to bragging of the so-called "higher values." Fragments of everyday life, scraps of slang, words from the world of consumer goods force their way into the poetic text. The safety-pin and the Rapacki Plan, the juke-box and the cough-drop appear in verse with the same right and the same naturalness as the moon, the sea, and the rose. Rühmkorf describes this mode of writing as "poetic revisionism." His own poems live on the interchange between lethal seriousness and malicious urbanity, aggression, and irony. These are the last two verses of a piece headed "What his Friends Say":

Ich blicke ernsthaft durch meine Brille, sechs Dioptrien,
in den pompösen Verfall....
Dies Auge, auf Abruf von den Göttern entliehn,
misstraut dem Sonnenball.

Ich fege alle Hoffnungen von unserm Tisch
zehn Jahre nach Oradour.
Ich sitze in meinem Sessel aus grünem Plüsch.
Ich besinge die Müllabfuhr.

I look earnestly through my spectacles, six diopters,
into the pompous dissolution....
This eye, borrowed on call from the gods,
distrusts the orb of the sun.

I sweep all hopes from our table
ten years after Oradour.
I sit in my green plush armchair.
I sing of garbage disposal.

A few lines from Günter Grass's poem "Friday" sound like a reply to this:

Schlimm sah es in der Welt aus:
Kredite wurden verweigert.
Ich aber wälzte grüne Heringe in trockenem Mehl.

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Als aber Heringe in der Pfanne erschraken,
wollte auch ich düster und freudlos
über die Pfanne hinwegsprechen.

Wer aber
mag grünen Heringen
vom Untergang predigen?

Things looked bad in the world:
credit was being refused.
But I turned fresh herrings in dry flour.

But when herrings took fright in the pan
I too, gloomy and joyless,
wanted to deliver a speech over the pan.

But who
would care to preach to fresh herrings
of the decline and fall?

Just about here my report might be brought to an end. It is full of gaps. Poetry in Germany does not rest upon a few names. We have not mentioned Erich Fried and Marie-Luise Kaschnitz, Rainer Brambach and Christoph Meckel in the West; nor Peter Huchel and Stephan Hermlin, Günter Kunert and Johannes Bobrowski who live in the other Germany, in East Berlin. Nothing that could be said about the German poetry of the West could also apply to the country's second state, to the German Democratic Republic. There a state of mind prevails to which the concept of Communism gives us no clue whatever and which cannot be compared to that of other East European countries, such as Poland or Hungary. The German Democratic Republic has become a cultural Albania. There the "Quarantine" has lasted right down to the present. The few poets who have not sold themselves to the Party are working under enormous difficulties. Others publish in the West or have lapsed into total silence. It is difficult to see in this situation anything other than a pseudo-morphosis of the old cultural policy of the Nazis. The general standard of the poetic output to be read in the official periodicals of that country is in keeping with this policy. There can be no doubt at all that there are to-day two different literatures in Germany which are more remote from each other than Allan Ginsberg and Yevtushenko, Moscow and New York.

EVEN THIS BRIEF, almost cursory report seems to me an imposition on the patience of a public that has taken almost no notice of German literature since time out of mind. Germany's literary export trade with Britain has almost always been a laborious and unsuccessful venture. Up to now it has shown no credit balance and up to now there has been no breach in the embargo on the import of German literature set up by British critics. Shaw and Conrad, Joyce and Lawrence, Auden and Eliot, Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, Huxley and Greene, Fry and Durrell, Wilson and Muriel Spark, Osborne and Amis, Beckett and Pinter have found in Germany a vast public and a measure of critical attention that is unusual. This is a gratifying state of affairs. I could not bring myself to draw up the balance-sheet on the other side. Let cultural *apparatchiks* for whom the import-and-export of literature is a matter of national prestige get angry. I find it more amusing to exhibit the picture which the British have formed of what the Germans write.

What the Germans have written, are writing, or will write is first of all "Teutonic." The wealth of associations attached to this word is considerable. They range from the primeval forest to the study of Dr. Faustus, from bearskins to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Castles and fortresses are Teutonic, but so are abstract terminologies. Wagner's operas and long complex sentences are Teutonic. Leather shorts, bull necks, and exaggerated studiousness are Teutonic. The Teutons are boring, have sweaty feet, and moreover are most unfairly "daemonic." A good example of the Teutonic occurs in Richards Hughes' novel *The Fox in the Attic*, in which I find confirmation of my suspicion that among the literary sources of this notion we must number a famous standard work on Germany, to wit *Dracula*.

However this may be, there is no denying that German literature has very often gone a long way to meet the stupidity, presumption, and arrogance of its British critics. Of course, if their curiosity had been half as great as their self-assurance, these critics could without much difficulty have discovered a German literature whose home was not exactly Bohemian attics or Bavarian castles.

All this is noted in passing in order to show up in the right light the temerity of two translators and their publisher who have recently presented the British public with a book of four hundred and nineteen pages in which there is nothing else to be read than poetry from the country of the Teutons.[2] Any criticism of their book must start from the fact that this endeavour does not merely fill a gap but enters a vacuum. That it could be undertaken at all is due to a lucky chance. Hamburger and Middleton are probably the only two inhabitants of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland capable of it: two poets who are also excellent

[2] *Modern German Poetry, 1910–1960. An anthology with Verse Translations*. Edited and with an Introduction by Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton. MacGibbon & Kee (London, 1962). Cf. also *New Young German Poets*. Edited and translated by Jerome Rothenberg. City Lights Books, San Francisco, 1959.

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linguists, two poets who know German—can they be found again in this part of the world?

They have invested an immense amount of work in this enterprise. The emphasis of their selection lies, quite rightly, on Expressionism. Not Rilke, Stefan George, and von Hofmannsthal (all of whom have a place in the *bürgerliche* literary pantheon though not among the German moderns), but Benn and Brecht are the dominant authors. The introduction too deals in the greatest detail, perhaps in too much detail (that is to say, with an almost Teutonic thoroughness) with the poetics of Expressionism and with its various phases. It advances solid, if somewhat abstract, arguments, and seems to be intended for the student rather than for the common reader.

In other respects too, however, in the breadth and weight of the selection, the editors have shrunk from no difficulty. At times one almost has the impression that they are determined to spare their compatriots none of the very things for which their suspicions are in any case on the alert. I should like to wager that the English reader of the English translation of a poem by Stramm, Goll, or Becher will be no less baffled by it than by the German original. Thus Hamburger and Middleton had no intention of building a *pons asinorum*; their aim was not enticement but instruction. And so they have produced an excellent working instrument which gains in value by being in two languages and which henceforth should be an indispensable text-book for every serious seeker after knowledge in this domain.

A FIRST BREACH has then been made in the barricade which since time immemorial has separated the English poetry-reader from the German poetry-writer. Nevertheless a certain intrepid courage is required to pass through it. The question remains whether some thought should not have been given to less serious and determined readers; for after all, poems are not written, or not only written, for professors and students of the history of literature, but chiefly for quite ordinary mortals. But the latter, in so far as they feel exotic tendencies in a continental direction at all, may consider that it is going too far to introduce them to fifty-six German poets all at once; perhaps they would have been content with six and a half. The question therefore remains whether the authoritative work that has now been made available ought not to be followed by a more modest, almost a more humane, one which would pay greater heed to the limits of untranslatability and the limits of Anglo-Saxon taste, in short to the healthy and understandable aversion to all poetry that exceeds a hundred pages and oversteps the bounds of what one can reasonably be asked to swallow. Fortunately it is not my job to answer this frivolous question.

The Man with the Tattooed Face

Sometimes blue lichen will creep down his face,
His eyes spark hate, two jellies
Flung high in some forest in rage.
Sometimes tears will fall through the trees.

The Tattooed Man in the City

His voice spoke and drenched all around him
Brooklike, the air was hung with smells of strange harvest,
Squabbling pigeons were for that instant enchanted.
He stopped; flew fearfully from what he had done.

Philip Roberts

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Two Poems by Diana Witherby

The Ridden Mind

I came by day—
You did not see—
But I fell back from sudden whirls
When, upside down, the sleeping dark,
Disturbed by my intrusion, moved.

I came by night—
You did not hear—
But I endured the lonely sound,
As though marauders woke a bird,
You cried far off, out of my reach.

At last I found
A door unlocked
That led into your tattered house,
And you were there, quite lucidly
To tell me of your ridden mind.

You told of fear
Without fear's cause,
Which spread its iciness through walls,
And froze you as you struggled up
To reach the ordinary view.

And while you spoke
I saw the rooms
Your madness had to use each day,
The flavour strongly animal,
As also the intent self-life.

Your eyes looked up
Straight into mine,
If only I could hold you there,
Embrace you, fold you, keep now sane
The human blue that gazed at me.

But suddenly
Your lids collapsed,
Like finished blinds that, as they fall,
Bring down a long-dead butterfly,
Whose powdered wings are done with light.

I waited on
Through dusk's low hour,
I left you glancing here and there,
I left you, and will never know
Whether or not you saw me go.

Fate

I was ready in the jungle
For the tiger's leap to tear my life.
I saw his camouflage and stripe,
His litheness near the waterfall,
And all the parrots' purple cries
Could not distract me from his eyes,
Glinting beneath the savage fronds.
But when I reached the harbour's calm
Moving at last to rest and pause,
How could I know he waited there
Behind the lapping lamplit wash?
The dark tarpaulins tumbled
As he ripped them with a stroke,
And when he hurtled through the shades,
I seemed to see again the curve
That glittered in the jungle's sky,
The extra constellation,
A tiger of disaster, starred,
Linear, above my head,
And heard my own voice whispering—
However much I fought or ran,
Could I have changed the aim of fate
Or do I bear disaster's mark?

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NOTES & TOPICS

John Strachey

THE IMPORTANT THING to remember about John Strachey was that he combined in depth a great number of normally quite incompatible qualities. It would be wrong to say that he had a scholar's interest in ideas; not a handful of scholars in any generation have his passion for understanding things. He had also a strong desire to have a hand in doing it. These qualities are not rare in isolation, or even for that matter in combination. But they are frequently accompanied by some of the less pleasant manifestations of zeal or ambition including a considerable disregard for the feelings of other people.

But Strachey was also a great gentleman. He was uncompromising in his thoughtfulness and good manners; he had tasted life widely, sensitively and with enjoyment and he was more than prepared to let others do the same. It is these qualities that are not usually at home with the first. Because he was never disagreeable or dogmatic and because he also had an open-minded concern for the ideas of other people, I imagine there were some who thought that he was insufficiently tough-minded. I am always a little puzzled when I hear someone praised for being tough-minded; it is not at all clear why brains are at their best when they are like leather although admittedly the simile is often apt. But maybe tough-mindedness means the ability to hold ideas with a dogged contempt for personal consequences. If so then Strachey was as tough as any man of his generation. He had followed his convictions into a number of very awkward places.

I first encountered Strachey, intellectually speaking, when, after his alliance with Mosley, his beliefs had carried him to Communism. (He was never a member of the Communist Party but, as he observed in later years, this was a technical detail.) At Harvard in the 'thirties we used *The Coming Struggle for Power* to advise the richer and more contented undergraduates of the awful fate that awaited them. They did not quite believe it (and neither for that matter did I) but it was thought that the book contributed to a most salutory unsettlement of the soul and this may, in fact, have been sometimes the case. It was a Communist tract and a brilliant one. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. has pointed out that the world's worst English is used either by those who are passionately pro- or pathologically anti-Communist. This volume (like Strachey's other books of the period) was the single and striking exception. As an exercise in persuasion, as distinct from the purely doctrinal rescripts issued by Lenin, Stalin and Mao, it was probably the most influential work of its kind in the century. Including the Modern Library edition, it sold, Strachey once told me, over 100,000 copies in hard covers in the United States alone.

It was influential because it was the work not of a Party hack but of Strachey and therein was the danger in having such work done by this kind of a man. For Strachey wrote the book and its companion volumes of the decade because he was impressed by the evidence—massive and unforgivable unemployment, no seeming remedy within the capitalist system, workers who were understandably and increasingly restive, and a seeming determination by the dictators to defend the system with such force and cruelty as might be required and to use war as the antidote for revolution. Strachey was a Communist at the particular moment in history when the reasons for being a Communist were best.

THEN THE MOMENT PASSED. And as the evidence changed Strachey reacted, perforce, to the change. Keynes and the New Deal seemed to suggest an alternative to revolution. *A Programme for Progress,* published at the end of the 'thirties, reflected this trend. Strachey submitted the book to the keepers of the Communist scrolls and they did not like it at all. They told him (he once told me) that its publication would be quite unblessed. Then within a few months came the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and a few months later the alliance between the Soviet Union and the western capitalist countries. For anyone who had put the power struggle in such stark form as Strachey—the capitalist countries retreating into fascism and the workers marching against them—it would have been hard to invent a more disconcerting mish-mash. First the homeland of the workers turned up in alliance with the fascists. Then the governments which were the political handmaidens of capitalist power turned up in alliance with the Soviets against the fascist dictatorships into which capitalism was counted upon to degenerate. With even better reason than most Strachey called it quits. From later conversation I would gather he was also strongly subject to the plain feeling of an Englishman that his country had to be defended against Hitler.

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He also once told me that the break was the most severe experience of his life. There was something comfortable about the great partnership of the Pariahs. The outside world seemed very cold. When he considered the emotional cost to himself he was more tolerant of those who accepted the soul-destroying alternative of accommodating themselves to all of the breath-taking turns in the Party line. But the experience left him without pessimism, without bitterness, without any strong need for self-justification and, above all, without the feeling that he might find a surrogate faith in Adam Smith, St. Thomas Aquinas or (in some incarnation) the late Joseph R. McCarthy. One reason, I suspect, was that his commitment to doctrinal Marxism was far less profound than he imagined. He had always been open to new evidence.

The war started Strachey's unexpected affair with military strategy and the martial life and this was continued in two of his three posts—as Under Secretary for Air and as Secretary of State for War—in the Labour governments. Middle-aged intellectuals usually find the whole muscular business of defence and war a great delight when circumstances force them into touch with it—they discover that they too can be learned on weapons, the custodians of terrible secrets, that they can take a salute and talk on equal terms with generals who they discover do not dazzle them with the knowledge of the military trade and, on the contrary, may be quite receptive to the ideas of an informed civilian. I would gather that Strachey's association with military matters was of this kind and that it was not very important. But I could be doing him an injustice for I know very little about this phase of his life.

However it was followed very roughly—his military interests continued—with the phase which I knew best. When Labour lost power Strachey returned to the task of trying to isolate the rules by which modern economic and political life is ordered. The books from this period—*Contemporary Capitalism* and *The End of Empire*—and his numerous articles and papers lack the strong central theme of his earlier work. In contrast they seem less connected, more topical. This was partly because Strachey was by now very much less certain of what the central theme should be. But it was also because the liberal economic society and the constitutional polity which Strachey had come to accept had no rigid parameters. They were far more plural and diffuse than the Marxian models, simplified further by hypothesis, of fifteen years before. Sensible comment had a similar plurality of theme.

It was no doubt inevitable that I would encounter Strachey at this time. I was doing, or trying to do, the same things. He had made what I considered perceptive (meaning approving) use of my ideas on countervailing power in his *Contemporary Capitalism*. But in 1956 fortune threw us together for several weeks in India where we were both guests of the Indian Statistical Institute and were able to travel together over much of the sub-continent.

I am especially in his debt for these weeks. At the time I had been at work in Switzerland for many months on the consequences of the break with the ancient and basic assumption, common to classical and Marxian economic thought alike, of inevitable economic privation. I had come to a full frustrating stop. I found Strachey full of unabashed enthusiasm for my ideas. He heard me out at length; the ensuing discussion helped to break the deadlock. Later in Switzerland and the United States I was able to finish the book, *The Affluent Society*, with (in contrast to the earlier *travail*) comparative ease.

I also learned much about Strachey at this time. There was no problem of the contemporary economic or political scene to which he had not turned his mind and on which he had not read the immediately relevant books and papers. Unions, the social impact of the welfare state, socialist administration, parliamentary government as an independent force, colonialism, the economic development of the new countries, Soviet planning, sex and psychiatry—he had looked into them all. Richard Crossman has correctly called him the most prodigious of self-educators. He was, I came to think, a little too open to new ideas—another reason why he was the most assuredly transient of Communists and one of the reasons, I assume, why as Minister of Food he was caught up in the African groundnut scheme. (Scientists and experts had approved; he was too generous to realise that there is no pitfall so deep as that which awaits the administrator who relies uncritically on the best expert judgment.) He was often too excited about books and writers of purely transient importance or none at all. But if optimism and an open-minded generosity towards the ideas of other people is a vice, it is surely the best of faults. John Strachey was a good and very intelligent man.

John Kenneth Galbraith

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De Profumis

JUST UPSTREAM from the terrace of the House of Commons is the outlet of a main sewer, and, at certain hours of the day, Members leaning on the balustrade can find amusement and occupation in counting the contraceptives floating down to the sea. The latest stages of the Profumo affair—I write just after a magistrate's court hearing—have something in them of this ardent contemplation of spent passion, but it is a game which, as well as becoming wearisome after a while, distracts the attention from more serious affairs. We have all heard fascinating rumours of who did what to whom where, and it would be priggish to pretend that we have not enjoyed them. The question that seems to have got itself overlooked is who is doing what to the country and how.

For, while the Profumo case has brought about an hysterical crisis in British life, it is far from clear why this should be so, and the immediate lessons to be drawn from what has happened are fairly banal. For the editor of *The Times* "IT *is* A MORAL ISSUE." But for him the charge is one of over-indulgence, and it is brought against the entire nation. So we had better watch our behaviour at office parties and make the best of Sunday cinemas while we still have them. All this does not take us much further—except to prove, by the appalling correspondence which followed the *Times* leader, that anyone setting out to be Praise-God Barebones these days is likely to end as Pecksniff. For the Leader of the Opposition the issue is one of security, but this can hardly be so in any crude or immediate sense. Even the most infatuated war minister would have sat bolt-upright in bed on hearing sweet nothings interrupted by "Darling, what about those nuclear war-heads for Germany...." Captain Ivanov's employers (possibly having read their *Anatomy of Britain*) must have been glad for him to frequent a "centre of power" like the Cliveden estate, but they would hardly have been in favour of his sicking on to a contact a girl with whom he himself was having an affair.

Of course, there is a moral issue and there is a security issue in all this, and they can be reduced to the same thesis. From the point of view of the national interest nobody cares from what chandeliers ministers swing—and some notable figures have been considerable acrobats in their time—as long as they do not do it in circumstances which could make them liable to blackmailing pressure—that is where the security angle comes in. Such circumstances must be present when the sexual activities in question are carried on in contact with London's half-world, and it is quite evident that the whole story of the Profumo case was that of someone knowing someone perfectly charming who knew someone rather less charming who knew someone who was not charming at all. No doubt, certain kinds of sexual enjoyment cannot be pursued except through such contacts, but in that case a minister had better give them up. There are sacrifices that those who wish to attain cabinet rank must be prepared to make.

So much for morality and security, for the actual security service does not seem to have come too badly out of the affair, whatever may be the case with the cabinet office. Certain riders might be added. By lying to the House of Commons Mr. Profumo has damaged the rather useful convention by which a Member can indicate to others that, this time at any rate, he is telling the truth. By lying to his own colleagues he did something worse still. On the aesthetic level one might find the whole business slightly sordid and reflect that, if people are going to have the vices traditionally associated with the giddy aristocracy, they might as well have the aristocratic virtues as well—one of which is the ability on occasion to say: "So I did. So what?" One might also think: "There but for the grace of God..." (a sentiment which has probably been more frequently felt than expressed of late in political circles).

WHY, THEN, ALL the fuss? The serious side of the Profumo case does not, in fact, lie in a flood of baroque detail leading to stuffy and banal conclusions. It is our own reaction to it that is depressing, tragic even.

For, after all, it is not as though we had not other things to worry about than the career of Miss Keeler, Miss Rice-Davies and their like. It is not as though there were not other subjects to engage the attention of a British cabinet than the love-life of the Minister of War. It is not as though the Opposition had not other grounds for attack on the Government. Here we are, in the midst of a crisis, trying to see our way through a painful task of adaptation, increasingly isolated abroad, requiring reform at home, needing more schools, more hospitals, more roads, a more efficient industry, beset by problems in every sphere of our national life—and what do we find of absorbing interest? What is it that takes up Parliamentary time, shakes one political party to its foundations and nearly causes the overthrow of the Prime Minister? A middle-aged man falling for a girl over twenty years younger than himself. It is not the immorality of the Profumo affair which is frightening. It is its frivolity. The

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whole business has wasted time and energy at the moment when we have little of either to spare. It has concealed real national issues in a cloud of rumour, disgust, and turgid moralising. It is a proof, if one were needed, of how inward-looking, how passionately concentrated on the contemplation of our own navels public life in this country has become.

BEFORE the failure of the Common Market talks supporters of Britain's entry into Europe (not a few in the pages of ENCOUNTER) had pointed to the danger of stagnation and lowering of quality in our national life if we did not take our place in some political and economic unit larger than our own island. But I must say that I never expected to see these forebodings justified quite so quickly. It is almost as if, the way into Europe barred by President de Gaulle, we were deliberately trying to avert our eyes from the world outside. The Profumo affair provides the perfect "X certificate" film for a boring afternoon. Only we have work to do.

Nor should anyone feel complacent about its immediate political effects. One striking feature of it has been a confrontation between that small section of the population which knows most of what is going on and that large one which knows little—a confrontation which is not to the advantage of the former. There may have been a reaction in favour of Mr. Macmillan, but that does not mean that there was no shock consequent on the average voter's suddenly being faced with what metropolitan gossip had accepted with a shrug. Immediately, this may have an influence on the position of the parties—after all, if one Conservative minister has resigned, others (including the Prime Minister) have appeared to be muddlers —but the effect will be wider than that. The Profumo affair is the first scandal of its kind which has taken place in Britain for some time: a scandal of a type familiar on the Continent wherein politicians are made to appear ludicrous, shifty, and incompetent. Public opinion may well tire of the flood of rumour which has been let loose, in which case it will turn against those who have worked to gain political advantage from Mr. Profumo's doings. Or another security case could give rumour a longer lease of life. But no one should think that this swaying to and fro of the sympathies of a bewildered public is doing much service to British parliamentary democracy. On the contrary, one of the most obvious consequences of the whole affair is that our system of government has come to appear a little weary and soiled at a time when too many people are inclined to consider it as such anyway.

It is, perhaps, guesswork to talk of an anti-political feeling in Britain to-day, but signs of this are not lacking. The real inability of the political parties to canalise the unused idealism of those under thirty, the success—even if only momentary—of a profoundly anti-political movement such as CND, the tendency even in politically-minded reformers to concentrate on cultural issues, demands for greater respect for the expert, admiration for efficiency without consideration of the ends towards which it is directed—all these symptoms add up to a trend

> WHETHER *we realise it or not, it is true that we ask of our public figures, and in particular those charged with national leadership of whatever kind, a higher standard of personal conduct than we are willing to practise ourselves. Indeed, there is clearly a feeling that "they" are in some essential way different from "us," or at any rate that they should be. This is nonsense, of course; there is no reason to suppose (and plenty of evidence to deny) that the proportion of adulterers, fornicators, homosexuals, psychopaths and drunks is substantially lower among members of the House of Commons than among the sum of the various strata of society from which they come. But whatever these people* are, *we insist that they* behave *in certain ways. If a Cabinet Minister is a homosexual (I believe I am right in saying that at the time of writing none is) we insist that he be either celibate or discreet; if a University Chancellor is over-heterosexual, we take it amiss only if he is found abed with his girl students; if a Bishop is an alcoholic, he had better not start a jag on the wine at Communion; if an Ambassador has a* penchant *for cheating at cards, he ought not to be caught doing so by the natives. It is important to separate the moral element in all this; obviously no one this side of a mentality like Mr. John Gordon's would regard a homosexual* condition (*whatever they might think of certain forms of homosexual* behaviour) *as in any meaningful sense sinful; equally obviously few would fail to condemn, say, the deliberate heterosexual seduction by a guardian of a minor ward. But the collapse of middle-class morality, and the resultant strain it has put upon middle-class hypocrisy, has meant that there is now a much greater reluctance to strike moral attitudes that once would have been inevitable and widespread; we now confine ourselves, in the main, to asking our leaders to behave rather better in public than we do.*
>
> *Is this not just another aspect of middle-class hypocrisy? I do not think so. It is, surely, a welcome step on the road towards full psychological health, nationally speaking. It implies that a man's private life is indeed his own business, and that only where it impinges on the public weal is it of any public concern.*
>
> BERNARD LEVIN *in* TOWN

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which can only be confirmed by the Profumo affair, which may, indeed, ensure that there will be more Profumo affairs in the future.

For anti-political feeling is now recognised by the parties to such effect that their efforts to "sell" their leaders to the electorate include almost any claim except that of their being competent politicians. The Prime Minister, instead of being shown as a formidable tactician or a statesman of vision, is put before the public as an old-fashioned gentleman, golfing and reading Trollope. The leader of the Opposition's claim to our votes is based, not on his being a clever and resourceful leader and administrator, but on the fact that he was once a boy-scout. And the result of this anti-political stance is that the attack is liable to be directed against the public images of opponents rather than against their policies. We are told that Mr. X cannot have this office because he is not married and that Mr. Y cannot have that because he is "unreliable"—*i.e.*, he drinks, is rude, eccentric or whatever may occur to the imagination of the reader of this well-chosen phrase.

THIS KIND OF judgment is now reaching ludicrous proportions, but there may be worse to come. If the Profumo affair provides a successful precedent for damaging seriously a political party through the peccadillos of one of its ministers, then it cannot be supposed that the precedent will go unimitated. We may be in for a competition in scandal, and, if this is so, there is no knowing where it will stop. Whatever happens, the lowering of tone which the affair has brought about in our public life is likely to continue.

Is this too sombre a picture? Possibly. But there is an awful purposelessness about our whole reaction to the Profumo affair, an expense of spirit in a waste of shame, which it is difficult to observe without pessimism. "DISGUSTED" and "EX-LIEUTENANT-COLONEL" have sharpened their pens and, in the resultant expenditure of hot air, a catharsis has been achieved which is meaningless, and which would be harmful were we to be convinced by it that anyone has behaved "well" or "badly". The whole thing is irrelevant—irrelevant to anything we as a nation may want to do. That is what makes one angry. For a long time after 1945 we had our illusions about our own power and place in the modern world. Too often we were like children building sand castles to be swept away as time went on. Now, when we are a little more frightened we make mud pies out of the dirt, and retreat further into childishness.

Anthony Hartley

Post-card from Marienbad

"AND this morning, Mr. Morris," said my guide briskly, rearranging a business-like bun in her blonde hair, "we shall visit Marienske Lazne, in the western area of our country."

My heart neither leapt nor sank, for it was numb with cold and scepticism. I was enduring one of those officially-sponsored visits to a Communist country to which members of my profession are, stifling their instincts and muffling their better judgments, from time to time subjected: and I was, after a week of it all, deep in disbelief. The country was Czechoslovakia. The time was the very depth and nadir of a grim Central European winter. The car into whose back seat I lowered myself, with a rather frigid smile of acceptance, was a bow-legged green Skoda. The driver was a friendly but cautious soul, who looked as though he would enjoy nothing more than an afternoon with Mum and the kids at the Palladium. And as she settled herself beside me, giving me a sweet but not altogether convincing smile, my guide added as an afterthought: "Under the old régime, you know, they used to call it Marienbad!"

Marienbad! Instantly a bell rang queerly in my mind, jangled but golden, cracked but still rich, oddly familiar after my peeling Baroque evenings in Prague, my icy folk-customs in the High Tatra mountains, my long shuddering drives through the snow-enshrouded, fir-blackened, heartless and cheerless winter countryside. Marienbad! It was like an echo of a golden age, just to hear the name, and many a discredited vision crossed my mind, as my guide kindly explained to me the new medicinal treatments for dispirited Workers' Families—visions of lace and white stiff collars, of clip-clopping greys and fawning courtiers, here a plumed Imperial hat, here a fluttering embroidered fan; little lap dogs, hurrying servants, coffee on spindly tables, the orchestra tuning its fiddles among the roses and the hotel manager, moustaches pomaded, hurrying to greet His Excellency. They were pictures of an age that was rightly ended, of a society justly abolished, of unfair privileges and out-dated protocol; but they retained an old lavender charm in the imagination, as of faded holiday postcards.

AND FOR ME they offered more: for through them all, through the hurrying old-fashioned crowds and the string orchestras, there glared boldly into my mind the eyes of a particular face. One of the divinities of my personal pantheon is old Jackie Fisher, Admiral of the Fleet, creator of the *Dreadnought*, iconoclast,

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egocentric, flatterer, failure and humorist, who died six years before I was born, but who is still marvellously alive in my affections. This old greatheart was an habitué of Marienbad in her palmy days. There he consorted proudly with the Imperial potentates, and danced blissfully with the Imperial ladies (for he had a sycophantic streak in him, like many ruthless men), and picked the brains of foreign generals, and cocked a gay eyebrow at many a continental beauty. Many a letter had I read in Fisher's huge-scrawled hand on the browning writing-paper of forgotten Marienbad hotels, with elaborate flowery letter-heads, and engravings of the winter gardens.

So we were going to Marienbad! As we laboured through that grim landscape, a place for wolves and Slavs, Fisher's wrinkled cynical face peered at me constantly through the firs. He had an extraordinary face, so oddly striking that legend had him the illegitimate son of a Ceylonese prince, so unforgettable that the Sultan of Morocco, once inspecting Fisher's Mediterranean Fleet, was asked what had struck him most, among all the gleaming lines of battleships, the great barbettes and the impeccable gun-drills, and replied without a second's hesitation: "The Admiral's face!" Never was a face so congealed with self-esteem, so glorious with gaiety, so proud, so contemptuous, so flirtatious and so compelling! I could see its heavy-lidded eye winking, all but imperceptibly, through the damp fog that lay like a shroud upon the fields.

BUT WE WERE THERE, and driving through the fine avenues of the place towards the graceful squares and colonnades that surround the baths. Marienbad was stately still, for all her dismal Communist miasma. The old hotels (now occupied, as I remember, chiefly by Workers' Groups) were still stylish beneath their peeling paint. The covered promenade (along which, as I recall the morning, the girls of a Youth Association were sauntering in frumpish crocodile) was still sadly elegant. The fountains were still delicate. The gardens were still fresh. The charming houses, all official or institutional, still possessed a faint scented allure of satin and window-boxes. It was a ghost, but a ghost with shreds of colour.

We looked around the place conscientiously; and inspected the free treatment in the baths; and examined institutions of one kind and another, I forget exactly what; and strolled a little forlornly among the pallid splendours of the spa; and presently found ourselves, marshalled by a huge Comrade of the coarsest kind, looking at the civic museum. This queer collection of souvenirs, mostly about the bad old days of the Empire, was housed in a small pretty villa in the centre of the town; and sometimes, as we wandered from room to room, from glass case to glass case, while the Comrade Curator leered at the Archdukes, and the guide attended intermittently to her hair—sometimes, as we looked at this sad exhibition my eye wandered through an open window, to the curve of the esplanade below. How easy it was to imagine those old grandees of the 'eighties, wicked perhaps, often selfish, generally heedless, sometimes cruel, but alive with a vanished panache and glitter! How easy to see the whiskered potentates, and the willowy English peers, and the doll-like Austrian ladies, and Fisher himself, the boldest of paladins, like a laughing mandarin among the feather-boas!

I TAPPED THE CURATOR, rather gingerly, upon the shoulder. The museum was fine, said I, but was there no one in the town who actually remembered those old times, when the plutocrats and war-mongers battened themselves so shamelessly upon the spa? The churl thought long and deep before replying, and then told us with a grin that there was somebody, in that very house—none other than the woman who had owned the place and lived in it in greedy ease and luxury, until the advent of the people's Government. Like a huge shambling bear he led the way, down the steep staircase among the prints, until we stood again in the hall of the house, beside the entrance. This woman, explained the Curator, was permitted to live in a room in the basement, in return for keeping the place clean: and opening a door he shouted hoarsely down the basement stairs. At first there was only silence. The Curator bellowed again, in a harsh imperative, and presently there was a sound of movement below. A cough, a rustle, laboured footsteps up the stairs; and there emerged into the hall beside us an old woman, dressed almost in rags, wiping her hands on her skirt. Her face was blank and quite impassive. Her movements were oddly stiff, as though she had had a stroke. Her skin was dirty and her hands were rough and crooked. She looked like some spiritless old animal, a broken pit pony, a lame and useless sheepdog. "Here she is," said the Curator, gesturing her roughly into the hall. "Ask her what you want."

I WAS EMBARRASSED, and angry with the man, and wished I had never summoned the old lady into this cruel limelight: but the guide smiled at her with sudden unexpectedness, and I asked her my one question. Did she happen to remember, out of all the foreign visitors to Marienbad, all the eminent men and dazzling women who must have crossed the

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corridors of her life—did she happen to remember Admiral Jack Fisher of the British Navy?

A glimmer entered her eye, and warmed, and flourished, and very nearly sparkled: and turning her head stiffly to look at me, and straightening her drab-cottoned back, she answered in a perfect, clear-cut Edwardian English. "Ah!" she said. "Jackie Fisher! Jackie Fisher! *What a face that man had!*"

So I shook her limp, soap-coarsened hand, walked out of the museum into the cold fog, thought how lasting was the glow of a good man's fun, and ended my visit to Marienske Lazne.

James Morris

Faulkner and Bennett

THIS was written in 1929:

> "If I were asked who seems to me at the moment the most interesting novelist in America, I should not hesitate in naming one who is not only unknown in England but is practically unknown in America also—William Faulkner. He is a Southerner, from Mississippi: young, prolific, and unsuccessful. . . .
>
> Faulkner . . . in his native State . . . follows the solid calling of a house-painter, producing at the same time out of the natural fecundity of his spirit novel after novel to be dropped by hesitant publishers into an ungrateful world."

This passage comes from a preface to the British edition (1930) of *Soldiers' Pay*.

By 1929, Faulkner's early novels had indeed stirred scarcely a ripple and consistently had left his publishers in the red. In New York he had brought out *The Marble Faun* in 1924, *Soldiers' Pay* (said to be the first in order of writing) in 1926, and *Mosquitoes* in 1927; but by 1929 the first two were already out of print and unobtainable because no bookseller could even be bothered to pick up second-hand copies. In that same year *Sartoris* and *The Sound and the Fury* though announced were still with the printers. The only Faulkner novel obtainable anywhere was *Mosquitoes*—and that, only if you knew where to look for it.

I recall hearing *The Marble Faun* spoken of—once—by my friend Francesco Bianco in New York in 1924; but in my muddled way half thought he was talking about Hawthorne, and had omitted to read it.

But one of the several New York publishers who took turns those days at bearing the financial burden of publishing Faulkner was Harrison Smith. Back again in America in 1929, that summer saw me cruising on the New England coast with Hal Smith. For a while his little yacht was fog-bound in Nantucket. To pass the time I regaled him with Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*; and in return he gave me Faulkner's *Mosquitoes* to read, then *Soldiers' Pay*, and then—since fortunately the fog still had not lifted—*The Sound and the Fury* in galley-proof.

A warm recommendation went home to Chatto & Windus (my own London publishers) to stake an interest in Faulkner. Of the three books read in Nantucket *Soldiers' Pay* seemed the best one to launch him with in England; but it was impossible to send them a copy since none was obtainable. All that could be sent was my own copy of *Mosquitoes* and an uncorrected set of *The Sound and the Fury* proofs.

Returning to England, I found that autumn that Chatto & Windus still had not quite made up their minds to take the plunge. This was understandable. Even successful American authors tended at that time to be found rather unappetising small-beer by British readers—and this one had not even made good in America. Moreover, this was not just a question of buying a single book but of bombarding Britain with a new and obviously prolific novelist—and a copy of the very book recommended for the opening salvo could not anywhere be found. No one in New York—not his agent, nor the book's American publisher—seemed even able to rustle up a copy of *Soldiers' Pay* to lend them to read. It was hardly surprising that no deal had yet been clinched.

But those were the days when Arnold Bennett was running his book-column each week in the *Evening Standard*. Bennett had then a greater influence on book-sales than any other critic before or since (people trusted him particularly because his critical style was so open and commonsensical: it was never his way to puff or over-praise a book, however much it had interested him). Being fresh from America, Bennett asked me one night at dinner what was new there, and scribbled the name "Faulkner" on his hard evening cuff.

Apparently Bennett wrote off at once to New York ordering the entire Faulkner *œuvre*. But by this time even *Mosquitoes* had quite disappeared: the only novel now obtainable was *The Sound and the Fury*, just out. On December 19th, 1929, Bennett's column ended as follows:

> I will close by giving an example of a novel which, good or bad, was worth publishing . . . *The Sound and the Fury*, by William Faulkner.

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. . . Having heard, from an Englishman of course, of the promise of William Faulkner, I sent to New York for all his works. But I could only get this one. The author is evidently young. He evidently has great and original talent. Influenced by James Joyce, he is exasperatingly, unimaginably difficult to read. He seems to take a malicious pleasure in mystifying the reader. The first part of his novel is supposed to be written by a deaf-mute who is also a lunatic! But William Faulkner may emerge from this youthful stage of eccentricity. If he does, he will emerge into wide appreciation. Infuriated as I am by the book, I would not have missed it.

From Bennett, that was enough. Chatto & Windus made up their minds in a final split second, Charles Prentice telephoned Curtis Brown while the lunch-time *Standard* was still wet from the presses and "bought" Faulkner—including *Soldiers' Pay*, which he still had not seen.

On June 26th, 1930, Bennett reviewed *Soldiers' Pay* at length:

> Last year I made some fuss in this column concerning the young American novelist, William Faulkner, who had been mentioned to me in conversation by Richard Hughes, author of *A High Wind in Jamaica*. No American, and even no American publisher, whom I asked about Faulkner, had ever heard of him. I sent to New York for his books, but could get only one, *The Sound and the Fury*, and that not without difficulty. Strange that Americans have frequently to be told by Englishmen of their new authors!
>
> The first printed fuss made about Theodore Dreiser's first book was made by an Englishman. *Sister Carrie* fell flat in the United States until a review of it by myself was republished there. Then Americans said: "Who is this man Dreiser?" and *Sister Carrie* began to sell in America. That was thirty years ago.[1] Yet Americans say that English critics sniff at American novels.
>
> Now Faulkner is getting a show in England. His first book, *Soldiers' Pay*, has just been published here, with a preface by Richard Hughes. His second and third will follow. *Soldiers' Pay* is labelled "Not a war-book." I call it a war-book. Its chief male characters are returned soldiers, and the whole story hinges on a terribly scarred aviator, who dies of war. Also war-scenes are directly described in the book, and very well described. Unless Faulkner runs off the rails, as some young men do, but as he probably will not, *Soldiers' Pay* will be an extremely valuable collector's item in twenty years' time. Faulkner is the coming man. He has inexhaustible invention, powerful imagination, a wond'rous gift of characterisation, a finished skill in dialogue; and he writes generally like an angel. None of the arrived American stars can surpass him in style when he is at his best.
>
> But praise of *Soldiers' Pay* must not be unreserved. It is a first book, and has the usual defects of a first book. It is clumsily constructed, being lop-sided. . . . To read it demands an effort (the effort is adequately rewarded). There is no excuse for this. The great masters are not difficult to read. You know what they mean, and in their passages of dialogue you know who is saying what. In too many novels of young authors a mathematical calculation, a counting of speeches, is needed to find out who is talking. A novel ought to be easy to read; it ought to please immediately. But too many young novelists seem to be actuated by a determination not to please. . . .
>
> In this matter, Faulkner is not guiltless. To get his full value involves some heavy work for the reader. But he is the most promising American novelist known to me; more promising than, for instance, Ernest Hemingway, author of the splendid *Farewell to Arms*. He has in him the elements of real greatness, and *Soldiers' Pay* contains many quite marvellous pages. . . .

In America, the effect of Bennett's article seemed to be even more electric than in England. This was *Sister Carrie* over again. Perhaps it nettled them that a British critic should discover an American author before they had discovered him themselves: at any rate (whether *propter hoc* or merely *post hoc*), Faulkner now became a best-seller in his own country; and certainly he never lacked appreciation thereafter.

Success would of course have come to Faulkner sooner or later in any case, whether or not Arnold Bennett had written about him. A hundred other chances could have triggered it. The most one can claim for the accidentals of this little anecdote is that maybe they speeded it up: perhaps, by as much as a year or two.

At that time, American letters seemed ripe for the emergence of a new outstanding figure. In my preface to the British edition of *Soldiers' Pay* had been written:

> The novel in America at the moment seems to have passed into a sort of interregnum. Generations change quickly there: and names only recently become really familiar in England—Lewis, Dreiser, Cabell, Wilder—seem there already to be looming with the vague bigness of the past rather than any actual, growing stature of the present. Nor has any whole generation taken their places; only a few separate writers, first among whom one immediately thinks of Hemingway . . . but even Hemingway, perhaps, has now done the work by which he is most likely to be remembered.

The times were propitious.

[1] 1900. The book was suppressed. Wells and Walpole as well as Bennett praised *Sister Carrie*, but Dreiser did not really win wide popular acclaim till 1925 with his *An American Tragedy*. Meeting Dreiser tête-à-tête once in 1929 he struck a young visitor as bulky, elderly, a bit dreary, and very bewildered.

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FAULKNER never quite got over what Bennett called his "youthful eccentricity," but the reader came to accept it as typically "Faulkner". He remained rather difficult to read to the end, even in the trivial ways Bennett had pin-pointed, and also through expansiveness and over-statement and long parenthetical passages. In part this difficulty may have been deliberate. Indeed it is arguable that requiring a constant effort from the reader on a superficial level keeps that reader awake and on the *qui vive*, so that he is alert to whatever may be really difficult at profounder levels of meaning. But in part (at any rate in his earlier work) it was due to his intoxication with words, since often this was an idolatrous obeisance before words he only hazily understood and sometimes had flatly misunderstood. Such words were bound to obscure the sense of any passage in which they occurred—and they recurred with the cumulative constancy of Homeric epithets, at least in those early books of his.

But I never discussed this with Faulkner: indeed I never met him or even exchanged letters with him; and I don't think Bennett did either.

THERE SEEMS TO BE a vein of sentimentality in every man: in every novelist, more than most. Some writers are afraid of it, just as some men are afraid of cowardice and so do desperately brave things simply to spite it: similarly these writers write desperately unsentimentally to deny and spite that vein they are only too aware of in themselves. Only a few look at it squarely, and give it a little rein deliberately, now and then, rarely and very sparingly and under strict control (like letting the dog out for a little run). I am thinking particularly of Homer, and Tolstoy. That way it does their work no harm at all. But for every writer with the gifts of a great writer there must surely come, when he becomes a "great" writer, a moment of terrible temptation to let his suppressed sentimentalism rip. Surely, he thinks, his genius will carry it off: he can allow himself an indulgence which would wreck any lesser writer—and he lets go.

After many years, I have just been re-reading Faulkner's *Mosquitoes* immediately after reading his last book *The Reivers*.[2] Both books show that his "wond'rous gift of characterisation" could be applied outstandingly to comic ends. The earlier one is brilliant satirical comedy but poignantly loving and youthful: the later one, brilliant romantic comedy of a broader, picaresque kind. I prefer the earlier book but do not under-estimate *The Reivers*. The Faulkner who wrote *The Reivers* had still those magnificent gifts: the same "wond'rous gift of characterisation"—an endless supply of new characters pouring down his sleeves like a cascade of aces: the same "inexhaustible invention" in the twists and surprises of his story (what an Ealing film this book would have made!): at his best, he still "writes like an angel". The scene at the mud-hole is unforgettable, and there are others nearly as good. But he allows himself depths of sentimentalism in this book about whores, and even more fundamentally about boys—the narrator is supposed to be a boy: depths of which any writer big as well as little ought to be ashamed. At times he seems to have lost all sensitivity to the difference between sentimentality and truth. The result is a partly corrupted book. It is well worth reading; but reading it is like eating a magnificent apple which has gone rotten in small patches though the firmness and flavour of most of the flesh is exquisite still.

Richard Hughes

[2] Chatto & Windus, 18s.

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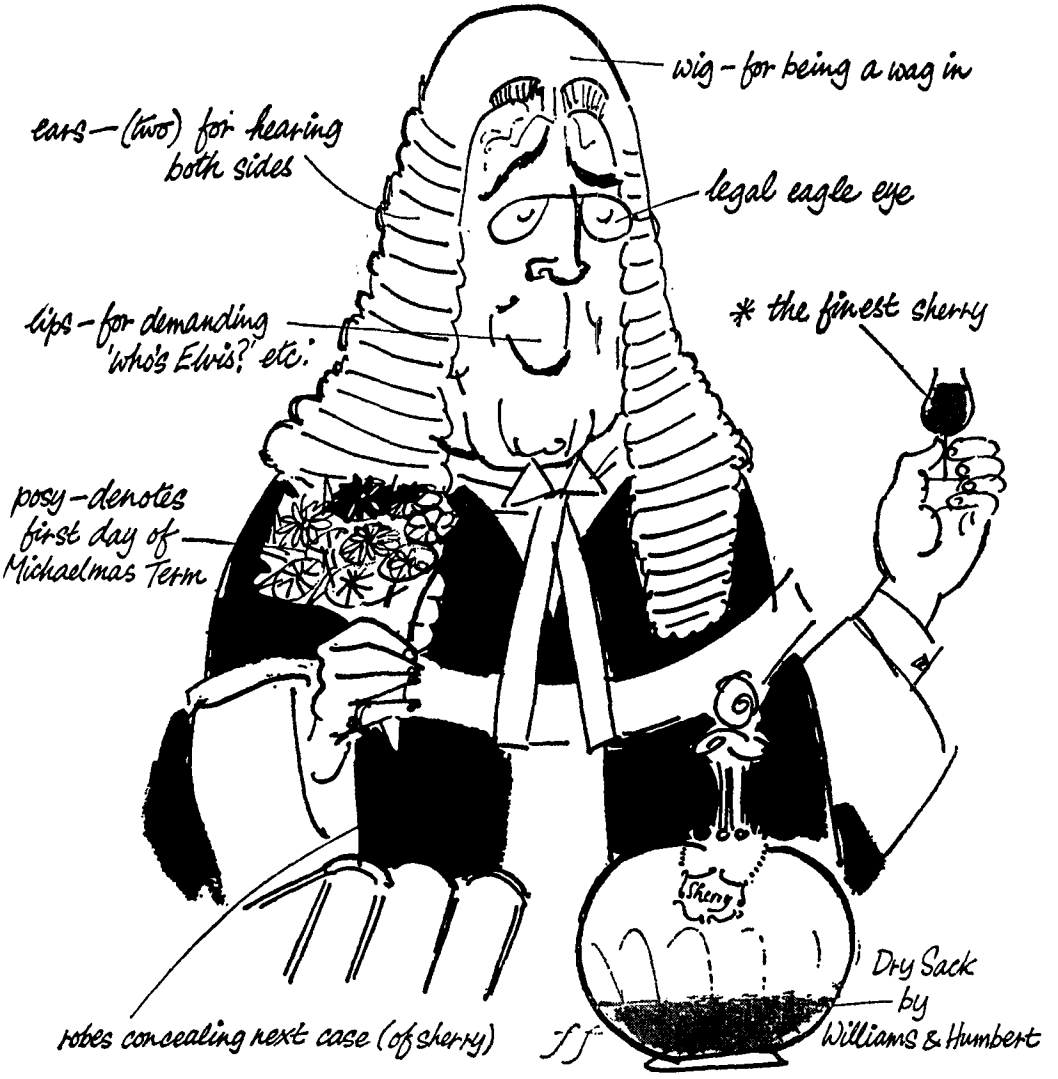
wig – for being a wag in
ears – (two) for hearing both sides
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Lonely Old Volcano

The Achievement of Wyndham Lewis — By WALTER ALLEN

A MAJOR EVENT of the publishing season just ended was the appearance of *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis*.* It was reviewed widely and at length, and its reception was certainly a wholly deserved personal triumph for its American editor, Professor W. K. Rose. But the reviews themselves showed that there is still no consensus of opinion about Lewis' stature as a writer or of his significance. His admirers among the reviewers duly admired and defended him; in general the rest tipped their hats in perfunctory gestures of respect and crossed hastily to the other side of the road. "Placings" of authors are always much more temporary than they seem at the time they are made; but there are now generally accepted views of Joyce and Lawrence, which have become nuclei of new orthodoxies backed by universities on both sides of the Atlantic. There is no accepted view of Lewis. He is still, as he was for Auden in the Thirties, the "lonely old volcano of the Right"—and the question now is whether the volcano is extinct.

The quarrel about Lewis dates from the moment almost when he began to write; Pound has recorded how he was barred in 1914 from the pages of the *Quarterly Review* because he was associated with Lewis' magazine *Blast*: "It stamps a man too disadvantageously," the editor explained. Inevitably, a man like Lewis, who began his career Blasting and who delighted to call himself The Enemy, must expect to make enemies. Yet, as we know from our own time, young men who begin their careers by blasting generally blast their way into acceptance by the literary Establishment pretty quickly. Lewis never did. I think it would be impossible to deny that he was "difficult" to the point of paranoia, and there is some evidence in the letters Professor Rose has collected that he was conscious as an art student in Paris of his paranoid tendencies. But, as the letters also show, he had reason for feeling persecuted because he was in fact persecuted; his war with Bloomsbury was not at all one-sided. As Eliot, his close friend for forty years and one who bore with him more than once with truly admirable charity and restraint, wrote on his death: "His work was persistently ignored or depreciated, throughout his life, by persons of influence in the world of art and letters who did not find him congenial." This was real. The persecution-mania was no doubt self-destructive; but as one reads the *Letters,* as indeed when one met him, what sticks out is not the persecution-mania but the energy and the heroism that were its concomitants and that enabled him to triumph over neglect, illness, poverty and, in the end, blindness.

But, having made so many enemies, Lewis was the last man who should have flirted with fascism. It gave his enemies a very handy stick to beat him with. It also led to a lot of hypocrisy, of which he was the victim. It is very regrettable, but the fact is, the modern movement in writing has been anything but liberal and democratic. Lewis' political attitudes, like those of Yeats, Pound, Eliot and Lawrence, and for similar reasons, which are inseparable from their art, were authoritarian. They could not have been anything else. Had he been a Frenchman, his fate would have been to find himself alongside Maurras advising Pétain at Vichy. As it was, a man for whom the 1914–18 war was the great traumatic experience of his life, he fell for a time into the ludicrous but fatal error of thinking that another old soldier like Hitler must hate war as much as he did himself. Yet it is worth remembering that even during his flirtation with fascism he did not

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lose the friendship and admiration of younger men and women who were as firmly left wing as he was right.

IT IS SURELY time now that Lewis' exploits in the art and literary politics of his day and his incursions into politics proper were put firmly in their place, and that place is certainly not criticism. His books are what matter. His writing career was very long—more than twice as long as Lawrence's, for example, which is one reason why it is still difficult to see his work clearly and as a whole. And the books he wrote are daunting both in their number and in their variety, comprised of fiction both more or less realistic and of work—*The Childermass* and its sequels *Monstre Gai* and *Malign Fiesta*—one calls visionary for want of a better word, of philosophical writings, literary, art and social criticism, the polemics and pamphlets the philosophical writings fade into, travel books, autobiography, poetry. When one has made the list one has still said nothing of Lewis' lifelong work as painter and draughtsman. That is outside my field, but it is necessary to say that Lewis was a painter before he was a writer and that it is on his practice as a painter that his prose was largely based. In a letter to Hugh Kenner that appears in Professor Rose's collection, he says of his first novel, *Tarr*: "In editing *Blast* I regarded the contributions of Ezra as compromisingly *passéiste,* and wished I could find two or three literary extremists. In writing *Tarr* I wanted at the same time for it to be a novel, and to do a piece of writing worthy of the hand of the abstractist innovator (which was an impossible combination)." The bewildering variety of his literary work, carried out on so many fronts, indicates the first question any critic must ask and answer about Lewis the writer: what kind of writer is he? What are we to take him as?

When one views his work as a whole, Lewis, it seems to me, is extremely close to the kind of writer John Holloway calls the Victorian Sage in his book of that name. Holloway's examples are Carlyle, Disraeli, George Eliot, Newman, Arnold and Hardy. "The activity of the sage," Holloway says, "a distinctive activity, a unique use of words, presents difficulties and problems"; and on Carlyle he writes:

> One of the things that most disturbs a modern reader of his work is constant dogmatism. Through Carlyle's work the nerve of proof—in the readily understood and familiar sense of straightforward argument—simply cannot be traced; and the succession of arbitrary and unproved assertions tends to forfeit our attention. Yet this is only a subordinate difficulty, because although proof is clearly missing, it is by no means clear what would supply this lack, as it is by no means clear what needs proof. The general principles which would summarise Carlyle's 'system' are broad sweeping gestures, hints thrown out, suggestions which leave us quite uncertain about their detailed import. And what is clearly true of his work is also true of the others. . . .

Holloway sums up:

> . . . the sage has a special problem in expounding or in proving what he wants to say. He does not and probably cannot rely on logical and formal argument alone or even much at all. His main task is to quicken his reader's perceptiveness; and he does this by making a far wider appeal than the exclusively rational appeal. He draws upon resources, cognate, at least, with those of the artist in words. He gives expression to his outlook imaginatively. What he has to say is not a matter just of 'content' or narrow paraphrasable meaning, but is transfused by the whole texture of his writing as it constitutes an experience for the reader.

With Lewis, as with Holloway's sages, what is ultimately important is the whole texture of the writing as it constitutes an experience for the reader. This is not to say that the ideas are unimportant, but it is their expression in and through the texture of the writing that allows the reader to give them imaginative assent.

LEWIS' IDEAS were few, fundamental and constant. Their relationship to those of Descartes, of the French neo-classicist critics at the beginning of the century, and of Bergson, whose lectures Lewis attended at the Sorbonne, has been documented by Geoffrey Wagner in his book, *Wyndham Lewis: A Portrait of the Artist as the Enemy*. They were not new but traditional ideas, though not, I think, ideas traditional to what Lewis used to call Anglo-saxony. But through the nature and the quality of his expression Lewis made them new.

HE WAS, above everything else, a dyed-in-the-wool, one might say a Black, Cartesian. It was not by chance that he gave Professor Harding, the hero of *Self Condemned* and in some respects a persona-figure for Lewis himself, the Christian name René. He assumed, as he said himself, the dichotomy of mind and body without arguing it. In his book on Lewis, Wagner reminds us that Descartes was so impressed by the resemblance of animals to machines that he actually planned to construct beast-machines and was condemned by the Church for doing so. Lewis, too, saw the body as essentially a machine and life as essentially mechanistic; when the body took over from the intellect, which Lewis opposed to the body, the

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machine took over. "Does this sense of the mechanical in life go back to what is as boring as any other extreme, some kind of old-fashioned materialism?" The question is John Holloway's in his essay on Lewis in *The Charted Mirror*, the most original and stimulating essay on Lewis that I know. "Not as Lewis employs it," says Holloway: "the analogy is too free-hand and flexible to invoke that desiccating affinity. The link (and this is the mark of his modernity) is rather with a mathematician like Norbert Wiener, who traces servo-mechanisms in the human body, but as counterpart to this, analyses mechanical processes by mathematics that make them seem half-human." If Lewis is the first—and still almost the only—painter and writer of the machine age it is not because he laboriously translates the forms of life into mechanisms but because for him the forms of life *are* in themselves mechanisms, just that; as he wrote in his collected art criticism, *Wyndham Lewis the Artist*:

> In the case of a dynamic shape like an aeroplane there is neither any reason nor any need for the collaboration of engineer and artist. All such machines, except for their colouring, or some surface design, to modify their shape, develop in accordance with a law of efficient evolution as absolute as that determining the shape of the tiger, the wasp, or the swallow.

It follows that Lewis was anything but a life-enhancer—which is doubtless another reason for the tendency of many critics hastily to cross the road on encountering him. For Lewis, the only thing that enhanced life was art, which he saw as its opposite. Art, says his spokesman, Tarr, in the novel of that name, "has no inside. It is not something impelled like a machine by a little egoistic inside." It is, in other words, nothing like a man, even such a man as that other spokesman of his creator, Kerr-Orr, in the short story "A Soldier of Humour", who describes himself thus: "This forked, strange-scented, blond-skinned gut-bag, with its two bright rolling marbles with which it sees, bull's-eyes full of mockery and madness, is my stalking-horse. I hang somewhere in its midst operating it with detachment". And Tarr goes on to make the contrast between life and art as extreme as possible: "Deadness, in the limited sense in which we use that word, is the first condition of art. The second is absence of soul, in the sentimental human sense. The lines and masses of a statue are its soul".

"The only thing that is not absurd," Lewis wrote in a late book, *The Demon of Progress in the Arts*, "is what is found where the earth conditions are stable and peaceful enough to allow the production of such great classical works as those of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Van

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Eyck, El Greco." It is from this conviction that all his philosophical and polemical writings, *Time and Western Man, The Art of Being Ruled, Paleface, The Doom of Youth* and the rest, spring. They were written either to defend art as he envisaged it or, by extension, to define the social and political conditions in which art as he envisaged it could flourish. Since he always acted on the belief that attack was the best form of defence, these books are largely assaults on those forces in contemporary thought and life that seemed to him to threaten art—surrealism, for example, Lawrence's primitivism, Sartre's Existentialism—by exalting the mechanical and and so undermining the sovereignty of the intellect in its classic sense.

WHETHER LEWIS would have written his philosophical and polemical books if he had not experienced the first world war it is, of course, impossible to say. "I started the war a different man to what I ended it", he tells us in his autobiography, *Blasting and Bombardiering*; but the difference, I think, lay in the fact that the experience of war and the insight into politics he thought it gave him confirmed his pre-1914 intuition that extreme violence was the normal state of life. The art movement, Vorticism, based on the concept of the violence of the whirlpool about a centre of stillness, his own Vorticist paintings and the novel *Tarr* are all pre-war, and they are works of extreme violence in which the violence itself is, as it were, violently arrested in stasis.

It seems fair to say that temperamentally Lewis was a man of extreme violence; violence was the necessary condition of his art and perhaps of his being. But, by a paradox, at the same time no man had a deeper awareness of the necessity of the opposite of violence; and a great deal of his pamphleteering and polemicising suggests a man fighting a desperate rear-guard action in order that he may achieve a temporary peace in which to get on with his real work of writing and painting: he lets loose a few rounds with his heavy guns, as it were, and then dashes back to the half-finished book or canvas, and when that is done is back at the guns again to put up another barrage. The polemical books, even *Time and Western Man* and *The Art of Being Ruled*, were, of course, highly topical books, written in immediate reaction to the specific moment. They were hastily written and at their worst seem slung together. But their influence at the time they were written can scarcely be exaggerated; they helped to form the characteristic thinking of the Thirties, even among those most opposed to Lewis politically; there is a lot of Lewis, for instance, in the early satirical Auden. And there is something else to be said about the polemical books. More than any writer I can think of, except Peacock in his very different way, Lewis had the gift of being able to make even ideas comic; witness, to take an example from a late book, *The Writer and the Absolute*, his account of Sartre's Existentialism. He could not write without visualising, could not write except in extremely sharp, precise images which tended, in their excess of proliferation and elaboration, always to the comic.

IT IS, HOWEVER, in his fiction that his ideas are most completely transfused by the whole texture of his writing. The texture is that of extremely violent comedy, the violence being expressed not only in what is depicted but also in the very manner of its depiction. As comedy, it is Bergson's theory of the comic made concrete: *la transformation d'une personne en chose*. Yet however much Lewis owed to Bergson, his idea of the comic was rooted in his Cartesianism. He was defending the intellect and its organ, the eye, against the body, against the mechanical, and his weapon was humour. Reviewing *Tarr* in 1918, Eliot wrote:

> Humour is distinctly English. No one can be so aware of the environment of stupidity as the Englishman; no other nationality perhaps provides so dense an environment as the English. The intelligent Englishman is more aware of loneliness, has more reserves, than the man of intelligence of any other nation. Wit is public, it is in the object; humour (I am speaking only of real humour) is the instinctive attempt of a sensitive mind to protect beauty against ugliness; and to protect itself against stupidity. The older British humour is of this sort; in that great but decadent humorist, Dickens, and in some of his contemporaries, it is on the way to the imbecilities of *Punch*. Mr. Lewis' humour is near to Dickens, but on the right side, for it is not too remote from Ben Jonson.

Eliot there establishes Lewis' literary genealogy: he is in the line of descent from Jonson (and before him, Nash), Smollett and Dickens. Here is Smollett's Lismahago:

> He would have measured about six feet in height, had he stood upright; but he stooped very much, was very narrow in the shoulders, and very thick in the calves of his legs, which were placed in black spatterdashes. As for his thighs, they were long and slender, like those of a grasshopper; his face was, at least, half a yard in length, brown and shrivelled, with projecting cheekbones, little grey eyes of the greenish hue, a large hook nose, a pointed chin, a mouth from ear to ear, very ill furnished with teeth, and a high narrow forehead, well furrowed with wrinkles.

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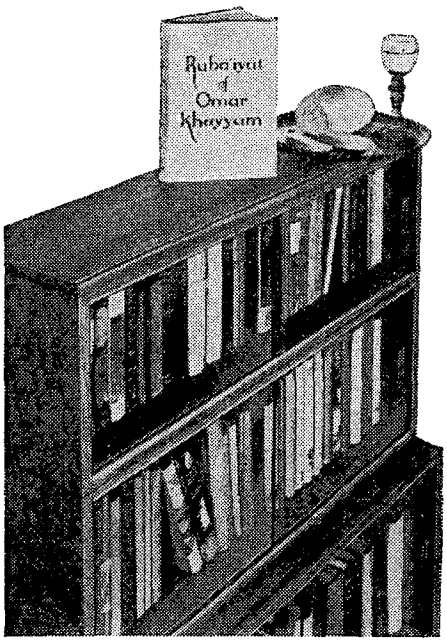
Here is Lewis' Canadian dilettante, Furber, in *Self Condemned*:

> His large and lustreless dark eyes brooded blankly, allowing one to divine a lazy but inquisitive brain, belonging to some aloof, observant, mildly interested *creature* of owl-like habits. A long shapeless black beard hung down lifelessly, concealing his neck and collar. As it stretched downwards from the base of his nose, this practically mouthless expanse threw the onus of expression upon his eyes. These hung reticent, with very little comment, secretive but harmless, above the weedy, pendant growth. The emotionless dull red of the mouth existed irrelevantly *in* this; the india-rubber lips secreted no saliva and moved very little.

The method of creation is the same in both instances; it is from the outside and is characterised by excess, which is fundamental to all comedy; and its intention is to dehumanise. Smollett turns Lismahago into an insect; Lewis turns Furber into an animal like a sloth. But Lewis carries this process of dehumanisation much further than any of his predecessors. It is all-pervasive because of the thorough-going Cartesian vision of life and matter that dictated the working of his imagination. Here, for instance, is Tarr:

> As a cover for reflection he set himself to finish lunch. The strawberries were devoured mechanically, with un-hungry itch to clear the plate: he was a conscientious automaton, restless if any of the little red balls still remained in front of it.

But here one must discriminate. In any Lewis novel the characters fall into two groups. The overwhelming majority of them are automata, machines that look as though they are behaving like men; but there is always set against them at least one character who is, as it were, consciously in charge of, using, the machine that is his body. We might call him the Lewis-man, the superior intellect, whom Lewis often calls the puppet-master, who exploits his body, as Kerr-Orr does in "A Soldier of Humour", as a stalking-horse, which, somewhere in its midst, he operates with detachment. In *Tarr*, which is set in life-among-the-artists in pre-war Paris, the Lewis-man is Tarr himself, opposed to whom is the painter Kreisler, who might be described as a machine of German make gone berserk. In *The Apes of God*, Lewis' satire on the activities of wealthy amateurs in the arts, the Lewis-man never appears in the action at all but remains behind the scenes. He is a painter turned philosopher called Pierpoint. Pierpoint, it seems worth



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noting, was the name of the public hangman of the time.

THESE NOVELS, *Tarr* and *The Apes of God,* are terrifying in the intransigence with which Lewis executes his vision of life as mechanism. Or rather, they would be terrifying if it were not for the exhilarating effect of the comedy, which could be defined as aggression transformed into laughter. Again, to indicate its nature, one turns to Kerr-Orr's account of himself in "A Soldier of Humour":

> I am a large blond clown, ever so vaguely reminiscent (in person) of William Blake, and some great American boxer whose name I forget. I have large strong teeth which I gnash and flash when I laugh. But usually a look of settled and aggressive naïveté rests on my face. I know much more about myself than people generally do. For instance I am aware that I am a barbarian. By rights I should be paddling about in a coracle. My body is large, white and savage. But all the fierceness has been transformed into *laughter*. It still looks like a visi-gothic fighting-machine, but it is in reality a *laughing* machine. As I have remarked, when I laugh I gnash my teeth, which is another brutal survival and a thing laughter has taken over from war. Everywhere where formerly I would fly at throats, I now howl with laughter. That is me.

That was Lewis too, in his earlier fiction. In his later, the best of which are *The Revenge for Love* and *Self Condemned,* there is a change. The Lewis-man is the puppet-master no longer; he is implicated, whether he likes it or not, in the messiness of living. The novels become, on the face of it, more orthodox; the prose, which Kenner in his book on Lewis well characterises as "the fabrication of a world . . . by a species of verbal impasto. A thick uneven pigment of words is dashed onto the page," becomes more conventional, what Lewis himself called its jaggedness is diluted. Not that Lewis does not see as idiosyncratically as ever; only he, in *The Revenge for Love,* could have described a Spanish peasant girl in such terms as these.

> She was walking very slowly: she was walking with the orthodox majesty of the women of those unspoilt districts—their skulls flattened with heavy pitchers—with a hieratic hip-roll that bore her away no quicker than a tortoise showing off its speed at the mating season. . . . Don Alvaro waited for a few more revolutions of the hips to bring this slowly-ploughing traditional vessel of Old Spain (built to accommodate, in capacious quarters, the fiery man-child below, and at the same time, several pints of water upon top—incubator and caryatid at once) to the tramlined thoroughfare for which it was headed. At the corner this slowly trampling contraption turned, on its own centre, with a sultry swirl of the skirt, and started to walk back.

The change is from the defiance of comedy to something very close to tragic acceptance. The body-mind dichotomy is no longer a matter for laughter, however aggressive. The Lewis-man has become not so much a laughing-machine as a suffering-machine. One sees this first in the character of Percy Hardcaster, the Lewis-man in *The Revenge for Love,* which at one level is a satire on political naivety. Its theme is the difference between political reality, which for Lewis is the pursuit of power, and political illusions. The action takes place in Spain and in London just before the outbreak of the Civil War, Hardcaster, the central character, being a Communist, a professional revolutionary, round whom is clustered a mixed bunch of intellectuals and artists, for the most part fellow-travellers blinded to political reality by their sentimental illusions.

ORIGINALLY, LEWIS intended to call the novel *False Bottoms,* and the image of the false bottom runs through it; the book opens with the discovery by a prison warder that the bottom of a Spanish girl's basket of food is false; and so on. From the beginning, Lewis insists that falsity and acquiescence in falsity are the general human condition and that men and women live as shams in a world of shams. This falsity is high-lighted in the superb comic account of an "art factory" whose products are fake Van Goghs. And the penalty for failure to acquiesce, to play the universal game of make-believe? Death or betrayal—or both, exemplified in the fates of the three characters who do not acquiesce; Hardcaster, a professional revolutionary, a "serious" man as Lewis himself was serious, the Australian painter Victor Stamp, a bad painter who is as it were saved because he knows he is a bad painter, and his wife Margot, who is made serious by her love for him. It is the presence of these characters that lifts the novel above the sheerly satirical to the tragic plane.

With *The Revenge for Love* the human enters into Lewis' fiction. It is there fully in the last novel, *Self Condemned.* This seems to me the most sustained and the most deeply felt effort of self-confrontation in the fiction of our time. It is, as Eliot has said, a novel "of almost unbearable poignancy." Lewis is here presenting a full-length portrait of a character very obviously based on aspects of himself, a portrait firmly and classically controlled and rendered with complete objectivity. His judgment on his central character may be seen in the ambiguous title.

In this novel satire is purely incidental. The tragic hero, Professor René Harding, is a historian who resigns his university chair in the

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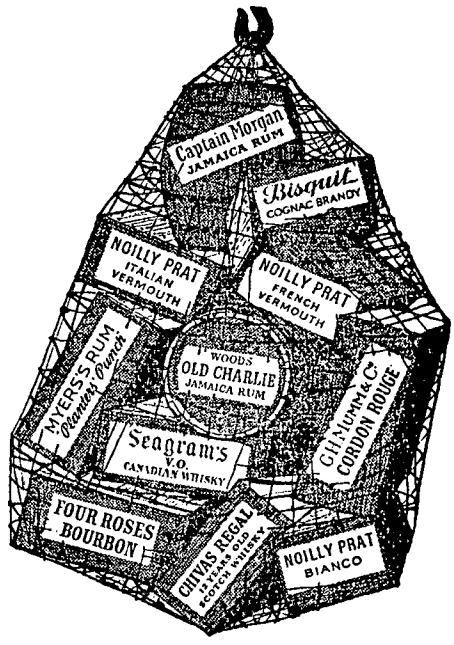
months before the war because he no longer believes in the kind of history he has been teaching and who emigrates with his wife to Canada, as Lewis did, when the second world war breaks out. Like Lewis, Harding is a man in revolt against the cataclysmic insanity of war and, rather than go on living in a society conditioned to it, opts out of it—into life in a hotel in the Canadian city of Momaco. The description of the hotel and its inhabitants forms the middle section of the novel; by implication, it is a criticism of Canada and, beyond that, of the human condition; as Harding says to his wife, after having been beaten up in the hotel bar: "We have had our baptism of fire, have we not, in the violent life of this hotel? It is an astonishingly violent place, but *not more violent than the world* of which it is so perfect a microcosm." This section of the novel, one of Lewis' most powerful pieces of writing, is dominated by images of ice and fire. In the end, the hotel is burnt down, and, as the firemen play their hoses upon it, the jets freeze over it to form an iceberg.

Harding emerges from the hotel section to resume authorship and become a professor again—but "the Gods cannot strike *twice* and the man survive". In consequence of his selfish refusal to return to England, his wife commits suicide, while Harding himself has a breakdown from which he comes out the shell of himself, a man driven by "the pressure of his own will-to-success, of the most vulgar type". Success comes to him, he joins the staff of a great American university, "and the Faculty had no idea that it was a glacial shell of a man who had come to live among them, mainly because they were themselves unfilled with anything more than a little academic stuffing".

THERE REMAIN the three books that make up *The Human Age*, *The Childermass*, written in 1928, and *Monstre Gai* and *Malign Fiesta*, commissioned by the B.B.C. more than twenty-five years later and written in the years of Lewis' blindness. The fourth book, which would have completed the whole, he did not live to write. I notice that a *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer has recently written, of an American scholar's study of England since 1688: "Nor will the view that Wyndham Lewis' *The Human Age* was one of the great prose works of our time be widely endorsed". If it isn't that, what is it? Certainly the last two parts of the work are the most ambitious things in imaginative writing in English produced since the end of the war, and indeed it is the very vastness of Lewis' ambition here that makes one's judgment of it necessarily tentative. There hasn't been time to assimilate it. This is not a work of realistic fiction but a visionary work—though the vision is rendered with all the particularity of Lewis' paintings—in which we see the Lewis-man and his puppet-Sancho Panza in Limbo, in Purgatory, and in Hell—the Paradiso was never written.

At present, I can see the parts more clearly than the whole, but in grandeur of conception and of execution it obviously transcends anything written by an Englishman during the past twenty years. Parts of it are dreadful in the strictest and purest sense, as Swift, for example, is dreadful. Indeed, the comparison seems to be with Swift, which is the index of Lewis' ambition and achievement, for, as with Swift, one has the overwhelming impression of a man daring to face and look into the depths. Increasingly, too, as one reads, one has the feeling of a human soul at stake, for increasingly we experience the action through the consciousness of Pullman, the Lewis-man.

Lewis' career as innovator and controversialist will be enough to ensure him a permanent and important place in the literary and art history of the century. His best fiction—*Tarr*, *The Wild Body*, *The Apes of God*, *The Revenge for Love*, *Self Condemned*, and *The*



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Human Age—is entirely *sui generis* and has the uniqueness that is one sign of genius; it is no more likely that there will be another Lewis than there will be another Joyce. His genius renders a total and uncompromising vision of life bleak no doubt but imaginatively satisfying because of its very intransigence, whether presented in terms of comedy or at the tragic level. In the first three of these books he brought into English prose qualities whose analogues are to be found only in modern painting and sculpture; and the kind of prose he invented he took as far as it can conceivably go. Above everything else, he expressed with a thoroughness unparalleled by anyone else the fate of modern Megalopolitan man dominated by machines. Of the writers he himself called the Men of 1914 he is, it seems to me, the one who, along with Joyce and Lawrence and Eliot, is likely to be of permanent interest. One says this with the more confidence because one has in fact now been living with him, and grappling with him, for more than half one's life.

The Sexy Cross

Maria Cross: Imaginative Patterns in a Group of Catholic Writers. By Conor Cruise O'Brien. *Burns & Oates*, 10s. 6d.

When this study of Mauriac, Claudel, Waugh, Greene, etc., was first published some ten years ago, its author, "Donat O'Donnell," was unknown except to a few intimates. He is now world famous as Conor Cruise O'Brien, and his recent history has been as exciting as any of the plots devised by the lurid imaginations of the writers he chose to study in his days of comparative obscurity. Everybody's man in Katanga has been involved in a great deal of black mischief, and he is currently Vice-Chancellor of an African University, which is exactly the sort of post that Greene or Waugh could make great play with. The name, Conor Cruise O'Brien, has a sinewy improbability and punning potentialities that would make it absolutely appropriate for a character in a Claudel play: "Conor"—I try, in Latin, but in French two words of golden suggestiveness; "Cruise"—at once world-ranging and a small vessel that might contain holy oils. At the height of the controversy surrounding his name, Dr. O'Brien was divorced and remarried, thus linking the personal and the cosmic in a way again very typical of the more Providentialist writers in his selection. These intimations are not misleading. *Maria Cross* is not an ordinary critical work; it is one of those rare books which, under the guise of criticism, express a personal and a philosophical dilemma.

The professed aim of the book, which is perhaps rather different from the deepest impulse behind it, is to react against the vagueness and inconclusiveness of most "Catholic" criticism, and to speak sharply and frankly about the authors under discussion. In an excellent footnote, Dr. O'Brien rebukes Jacques Madaule for saying in tones of hushed reverence only too typical of Catholic critics, *"On n'analyse pas Claudel."* "A critic," remarks Dr. O'Brien, "has no business to be so modest. Jacob might as well have said, 'One doesn't wrestle with angels.'" Dr. O'Brien wrestles manfully with all these angels, and if they turn out to be in some respects Luciferian, he does not hesitate to say so. Indeed, a quick glance through his book might lead one to think that he has investigated the major Catholic writers of the day in order to explode them one by one: Mauriac ceased to write good books in his forties, when he compromised with his class background; Waugh's effectiveness as a writer, even in his better, earlier works, is based on a snobbish contempt for the modern world and an incurably childish and romantic approach; Greene's basic emotion is "pity", but it is a soft sentiment, very different from the astringency of genuine Christian love, and it may surround his heroes with a fuzz of modest self-indulgence; Léon Bloy thought at times that he was God, and it is debatable whether or not he was certifiably insane; Péguy and Claudel are a mass of shifting symbolism, which seems to show that they are trying to creep back into the womb at the same time as they betray a suspicious complicity with certain aspects of Fascism.

More serious still—and this is why Dr. O'Brien has taken the significant name of a Mauriac heroine, Maria Cross, as his general title—sexual ambiguity, sexual guilt, and cruelty are at the root of their attitudes. They all believe in suffering connected with sex; they confuse the mother with the mistress, passion with the Passion, copulation with the Crucifixion. None of them has the sane, broad-minded approach to the subject which is sometimes said to be characteristic of Catholics as opposed to Protestants. They are, in fact, Puritans, whose repressed instincts flower in all sorts of peculiar ways. Mauriac's obsession is indicated by the inability of his heroes to transfer their passion from the mother-figure to some real woman with whom they can have an adult relationship. The separated lovers in Claudel

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think of themselves as spending what should have been their wedding-night nailed to separate crosses. Greene brings in joyless sex as a way of increasing the atmosphere of doom already indicated by flapping vultures and hostile nature. Behind Waugh's view of sex lies a streak of cruelty, which explains his interest in necrophilia and cannibalism. Bloy, who in real life sometimes tried to equate sex with Christian mysticism, goes furthest by declaring, in so many words, that there is a parallel between the emission of semen by the copulating male and the expulsion of the Holy Ghost from Christ's body on the cross. Such a comparison does little to make sex "healthy" or "normal", but certainly serves to increase its intensity.

Well, you might say, all these poor fellows, whatever their stylistic gifts, are in pretty sad case and ought to be despatched to the nearest clinic for guidance. They feel themselves to be exiles from some impossible heaven; they want to return to their childhood dreams of romance, which were cushioned in bourgeois security; they long for the Middle Ages when God's finger could be clearly discerned directing the course of pre-industrial, pre-scientific events; they have a horror of post-Renaissance rationalism and pine for the values of the blood, for tradition, race, ancient landed families or noble representatives of some reassuring mystic order, such as policemen and priests. What a good thing that Dr. O'Brien, a pillar of the Enlightenment, a former international civil servant, a carrier of academic light into dark places, should have cleared up and disinfected this mess by the acuteness of his analysis and the corrosiveness of his wit.

ACTUALLY, THE SITUATION is not as simple as that. Not for nothing has Dr. O'Brien come out of Ireland. If he has written a book about eight Catholics, it is because, despite his reservations, he believes in their greatness; they are, for him, the best modern writers, the ones he has thought it worthwhile to write about. It is true that a whole side of his nature revolts against them and this is why, in his chapter on Claudel, he invents a character, "the logical, post-Freudian materialist," who steps forward and declaims against the "eloquent French somnabulist" under discussion. But I am not sure that Dr. O'Brien is really fair to his own doubts, because he turns the post-Freudian materialist into a caricature of dogmatic certainty. One may question the ultimate quality of these Catholic writers without going to the extreme of declaring:

> Everything which we now call by this archaic name of *spiritual*—art, religion, and various glorifications of sexual inhibition, "chivalry," for instance—is about to crumble away.... To a new generation, completely carnal and completely rational, the idea of poetry will be as incomprehensible as the ideas of typhus.

Having led his objector out on to this limb, Dr. O'Brien proceeds to demolish him, by arguing that he is missing the point:

> Where the materialist goes wrong is not in discernment of a set of facts, or even in his interpretation of the facts, but in his unscientific assumption that only one set of facts is relevant and only one interpretation on one level is possible.

I wonder how many modern "materialists" (supposing they feel they can define "matter" clearly enough to lay claim to the appellation) believe that only one set of facts is relevant and one interpretation possible. Nor am I convinced by the further arguments put forward by Dr. O'Brien to offset his criticisms of these writers. He says, for instance, that although Claudel and Péguy had similar obsessions, they cannot be lumped together negatively, because their works are very different. This strikes me as a non-sequitur; one may readily admit that Claudel and Péguy make very different uses of their obsessions and are, in their outward manifestations, two very different types of Catholic,

did you know that:

1. **Prof. Trevor-Roper, Lord Woolton and Sir Laurence Olivier have expressed disbelief that Shakespeare wrote the plays attributed to him.**

2. **Anne Hathaway of Shottery married William Wilsonne on Jan. 17th, 1579, three years before Shakespeare married. This underlines the fact that the so-called "Anne Hathaway's Cottage" is completely bogus.**

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without agreeing that either has a satisfactory philosophy. Dr. O'Brien also claims that their value can be perceived by a simple contrast with the work of a highly intellectual, non-believing poet, to wit Valéry, perhaps the outstanding French sceptic of the 20th century. This particular passage is worth quoting, because it seems to me to contain both a misinterpretation and an intellectual abdication:

> There is probably no poem, in any language, of greater verbal brilliance than Valéry's *Le Cimetière marin* and no poem in which the religious sense is so conspicuously and glitteringly absent:
>
> *Tout va sous terre et rentre dans le jeu.*
>
> In the result, this perfect jewel of cultivated materialism is curiously null, an eternally abandoned pyramid of virtuosity. Its conclusion, with
>
> *Le vent se lève! Il faut tenter de vivre!*
>
> gives in a literal sense, the game away; all that elaborate and impeccable felicity was no more than a game, of which the ivory pieces are put away when the serious business of "living" is resumed. The beauties of *Le Cimetière marin* have more in common with the goldsmith's art than they have with such a work as Baudelaire's *Crépuscule du soir—*
>
> *Recueille-toi, mon âme, en ce grave moment—*
>
> for in Baudelaire we know that poetry is not being used as a game or decoration but with profound seriousness, as incantation for admission to another dimension. That is to say that for the religious poet poetry is a kind of magic. This is "bad" from the materialist—and suspect from the orthodox—standpoint but it is undeniably true to the origins of poetry, in ritual, in magic, and in hymns, and true also to what all of us, whether consciously or unconsciously, expect from the highest kind of poetry. If we resent in *Le Cemetière marin* a kind of profanation or vacuity, it is because of this expectation, this magical conception on our part of the nature of poetry. We do not like to be told at the end of the story that "it was only a dream," for we know obscurely that this represents an arrogant and philistine intrusion of the rational mind.

The misconception, in this excellently written paragraph, is that for Valéry, poetry is a game or a decoration. On the contrary, it is precisely an incantation (hence the title: *Charmes*, carmina), but one which relies on no gratuitous belief and attempts to carry the rational faculty along with it—which it succeeds in doing to an astonishing degree. *Il faut tenter de vivre* does not wipe out what went before; it marks a regretful transition from the contemplative to the active state.

The abdication is in the statement that Valéry, by using his intelligence, is allowing "an arrogant and philistine intrusion of the rational mind". Why should Dr. O'Brien be so keen to denigrate rationality? Here we can turn his own phrase against him and say that a critic has no business to be so modest about his stock in trade, and in particular should not be condescending about those artists who manage both to create and to remain intelligent.

THE BASIS of Dr. O'Brien's admiration for his chosen authors is that they strike down deep into things common to humanity and touch "some essential all-underlying tufa." He appears, indeed, to consider them as great, intuitive Unconsciousnesses, who offer a womb-like broth of dark, nutritious saps. In praising them, he attacks not only sceptical rationality but also Protestantism:

> Modern Protestantism, which is dead from the waist downwards, which conceals the Cross, refuses devotion to the Mother of God, ignores the Communion of Saints, lays its emphasis on the reasonable rather than the mysterious, has nothing to offer imaginations like these.

And imaginations like these are so tuned to suffering that they see both their personal lives and universal history (or the history of their country) in terms of the Crucifixion. This is their great distinguishing feature:

> The power of conviction which the best in these writers has over others, who are not conscious of sharing either their religious outlook or their pattern of feeling, comes, I think, from this intuitive harmony of mystery and suffering, the reverberation, even at the oblique touch of a fingernail, of the great Catholic bell. However much we may disclaim the tie, we are all related, like Raymond and his father—through Maria Cross.

My reaction to this is the vulgar one: speak for yourself. If religion is a projection of the mother/mistress mix-up on to a cosmic backdrop, then I think it ought to be condemned very heartily. I am not denying that there is a mother/mistress mix-up and that it is often acutely expressed by these authors. What I find shocking is the attempt to write a sexual dilemma across the sky, as if it were of universal spiritual significance, or to annex God to one's particular neurosis. In so far as the cross is a sexual symbol, it is deplorable, and could with advantage be replaced by the phallus, which is at least clear and unpretentious. My uneasiness about Claudel, Péguy, Bloy, Mauriac, and Bernanos arises from the feeling that they are dramatising frustrations that result from local social or personal prejudice, that is, from non-essential forms of evil, and which would be seen as non-essential by keener intelligences. This is not the whole story, of course; at the

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same time, they have great literary gifts and make many incidental points with consummate skill, but they all confuse issues instead of clarifying them. Claudel and Bloy are the greatest transgressors in that they are constantly assuming, with an arrogance far greater than that of any rationalist, that they have some definite inkling of God's great purpose in putting them in the situation in which they find themselves. Bloy's *Journal* is consistently entertaining precisely because of its mad extravagance, and some of Claudel's dramatic works, such as *Tête d'Or*, *Le Soulier de Satin*, and *Christophe Colomb* are interesting pieces of self-absorption masquerading as statements about the universe. It is not enough to say that these writers strike down to "some all-underlying tufa". As much could be said of all authors of bad best-sellers. Literature, and therefore criticism, is concerned not only with the tufa but also with all the layers of being above it, and if these are not properly organised, then the works are defective. Dr. O'Brien proves that, in many instances, the symbolism is drifting and interchangeable, and that what the writer is really expressing, unknown to himself, is a web of emotions about sex and God that are not necessarily connected with each other. Then, without producing any valid theological or literary reasons for his change of attitude, Dr. O'Brien suddenly backpedals vigorously and asks us to accept the web as having some mystic rightness.

Consequently, to me at least, his book seemed to be cracked down the middle. But I wish there were more vital critical works of this kind, cracked or uncracked.

J. G. Weightman

Sporting Life

"WHO IS THE greatest cricketer in the world?" The question came up in a General Knowledge test one day in 1940, when I was in the fourth standard at the Tranquillity Boys' School in Port of Spain. I saw it as a trap question. Though I had never seen him play, and he was reported to live in England, no cricketer was better known to me than Learie Constantine. Regularly in the *Trinidad Guardian* I saw the same picture of him: sweatered, smiling, running back to the pavilion bat in hand. To me the bat was golden: Constantine, in a previous General Knowledge test, had proved to be "the man with the golden bat" as, earlier, he had been "the man with the golden ball". But now—the greatest cricketer? I wrote "Bradman". This was wrong; the pencilled cross on my paper was large and angry. "Constantine" was the answer to this one too.

The teacher was a Negro, brownskinned, but this is a later assessment and may be wrong: to me then, and for some time afterwards, race and colour were not among the attributes of teachers. It is possible now to see his propaganda for Constantine as a type of racialism or nationalism. But this would be only part of the truth. Racial pride pure and simple in the victories of Joe Louis, yes. But the teacher's devotion to Constantine was more complex. And it is with the unravelling of this West Indian complexity that C. L. R. James, politician, pamphleteer, historian, former cricket correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, is concerned. He has done his job superbly.[1]

Beyond a Boundary, like Nirad Chaudhuri's *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, is part of the cultural boomeranging from the former colonies, delayed and still imperfectly under-

[1] *Beyond a Boundary*. By C. L. R. JAMES. Hutchinson, 25s.

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stood. With one or two exceptions, a journalistic reaction to his material—cricket—has obscured the originality of Mr. James' purpose and method.

Since 1950 the newspapers have perhaps made us too familiar with calypsos at Lord's. For West Indians, as one cricket writer says, the game is a carnival. But what a game to choose for a carnival! It is leisurely, intricate, difficult to appreciate, its drama often concealed or curtailed; and the players stop for tea. Soccer, swift, short and brutal, would have been more suitable; or baseball, or bullfighting. But cricket has been chosen; and the conclusion must be that we are dealing with more than the picturesque. Consider just what cricket means to the West Indian: in Trinidad, with a population of 800,000, 30,000 can go to a test match on one day. Consider the mixed population. Here is Mr. James describing the cricket field of his school in the 1910s:

> We were a motley crew. The children of some white officials and white business men, middle-class blacks and mulattos, Chinese boys, some of whose parents still spoke broken English, Indian boys, some of whose parents could speak no English at all, and some poor black boys who had won exhibitions or whose parents had starved and toiled on plots of agricultural land and were spending their hard-earned money on giving the eldest boy an education. Yet rapidly we learned to obey the umpire's decision.... We learned to play with the team.

Racial generalisations—about certain people being good at ball games—won't help. There has been no West African cricketer; the only Chinese cricketers of standing have come from Trinidad; and, though the fact is seldom noticed, white West Indians have produced more first-class players per thousand of their population than any other community anywhere. Consider now the history of the islands: slavery until 1834, indentured labour until 1917. And then consider the cricket code: gentlemanliness, fairplay, teamwork. The very words are tired and, in the West Indian situation, ridiculous, irrelevant. But they filled a need. In islands that had known only brutality and proclaimed greed, cricket and its code provided an area of rest, a release for much that was denied by the society: skill, courage, style: the graces, the very things that in a changed world are making the game archaic. And the code that came with the game, the code recognised by everyone, whatever his race or class, was the British public-school code:

> I learned and obeyed and taught a code, the English public-school code. Britain and her colonies and the colonial peoples. What do the British people know of what they have done there? Precious little. The colonial peoples, particularly West Indians, scarcely know themselves as yet.

TWENTY YEARS AGO the colonial who wrote those words might have been judged to be angling for an O.B.E. or M.B.E. But Mr. James, who is over 60, has a background of Marxism (he was a prominent follower of Trotsky) and African nationalism. He was the first of the emigrant West Indian writers; and his first book, published in 1933, was *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*. Self-government has more or less come to the West Indies; Sir Learie Constantine is now the Trinidad High Commissioner in London. The West Indies, captained for the first time by a black man, did great things in Australia in 1960–61. A quarter of a million people came out into the streets of Melbourne to say goodbye to the cricketers: West Indian cricket's finest moment, which Mr. James sees as something more. "Clearing their way with bat and ball, West Indians at that moment had made a public entry into the comity of nations." It is a success story, then, that Mr. James has to tell, but an odd one, since it is also the story of the triumph of the code. To Mr. James Frank Worrell is more than the first black West Indian captain: "Thomas Arnold, Thomas Hughes and the Old Master himself would have recognised Frank Worrell as their boy."

This is the last sentence of Mr. James' book, and this is his astounding thesis. To dismiss it would be to deny the curious position of the West Indies and West Indians in the Commonwealth, to fail to see that these territories are a unique imperial creation, where people of many lands, thrown together, "came to maturity within a system that was the result of centuries of development in another land, was transplanted as a hothouse flower is transplanted and bore some strange fruit". Stollmeyer, Gomez, Pierre, Christiani, Tang Choon, Ramadhin: the names of West Indian cricketers are sufficient evidence. To be a nationalist, Mr. James says elsewhere, you must have a nation. The African in Africa had a nation; so had the Asian in Asia. The West Indian, whatever his community, had only this "system"; and my fourth standard teacher could only grope towards some definition of his position in the world by his devotion to Constantine.

It is part of the originality and rightness of Mr. James' book that he should have combined the story of his development within the system with his view of West Indian political growth, and combined that with sketches of West Indian cricketers he knew and watched develop.

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In the islands the cricketers were familiar to many; they were as much men as cricketers. So they emerge in Mr. James' pages, but even so they remain touched with heroic qualities, for their success, as with Constantine or Headley, was the only type of triumph the society as a whole knew. And their failure, as with Wilton St. Hill who, achieving nothing in England in 1928, remained all his life a clerk in a department store, bitter tragedy.

How did Mr. James become part of this "system?" He was born in a small Trinidad country town at the turn of the century. His father was a teacher. Yet slavery had been abolished only 70 years before, and "Cousin Nancy, who lived a few yards away, told many stories of her early days as a house-slave." Already, then, the slave society had been transformed, its assumptions destroyed; and this rapid transformation must be regarded as part of the West Indian good fortune. The family was not rich, but for the young James, as for every boy in the island, there was a narrow way out. Every year the government offered four exhibitions to one of the two secondary schools. There a boy could get a Senior Cambridge Certificate, which would ensure a modest job in the civil service. He could do more: he could win one of the three annual scholarships. With this he could get a profession in England, come back to Trinidad, make money and achieve honour. The form of promising boys was studied as carefully as that of racehorses; the course, from exhibition to scholarship, aroused island-wide interest and excitement.

James won his exhibition. He came from a house with books. Preparing for his exhibition, he became a "British intellectual long before I was ten, already an alien in my own environment." But he was ready for the public-school code of the Queen's Royal College, staffed for two generations by Oxford and Cambridge men. "Our masters, our curriculum, our code of morals, *everything* began from the basis that Britain was the source of all light and leading, and our business was to admire, wonder, imitate, learn." It was not hard. The colony might be ruled autocratically by Englishmen, but there was as yet no National Question and, within the school, no race question. "If the masters were so successful in instilling and maintaining their British principles as the ideal and norm it was because within the school, and particularly on the playing field, they practised them themselves.... They were correct in the letter and in the spirit." They were also not competing with any other system. To-day, he says, these teachers with their "bristling Britishness" would be anachronisms. But was it possible to reject them then? Was it possible for Mr. James, 40 years later, at a public meeting in Manchester, to accept Mr. Aneurin Bevan's sneers at public-school morality? As it was, however, the playing fields of Queen's Royal College undid Mr. James. Cricket possessed him; he did not win the scholarship. But he had educated himself "into a member of the British middle class." In 1932, with the encouragement and help of Learie Constantine, he came to England. And he has been a wanderer ever since.

To me, who thirty years later followed in his path almost step by step—but I only watched cricket, and I won the scholarship—Mr. James' career is of particular interest. Our backgrounds were dissimilar. His was Negro, Puritan, fearful of lower-class contamination; mine was Hindu, restricted, enclosed. But we have ended speaking the same language; and though England is not perhaps the country we thought it was, we have both charmed ourselves away from Trinidad. "For the inner self," as Mr. James writes, "the die was cast."

In our absence the static society we knew has altered. Secondary education is free. Not three, but more like thirty, scholarships are given each year. With the new nationalism and confidence, the public-school code has become as anachronistic as the masters who taught it. What new code will be developed in a society so clearly British-made? Cricket is no longer a substitute for nationalism. Has it then served its purpose, and will it die in the West Indies as it has died (in spite of Dexter, in spite of the Lord's test) in England? Trinidad, we must remind ourselves, has produced no major player since Ramadhin, discovered in 1950. It would be interesting to have Mr. James' views. In the meantime let us rejoice over what he has given us. *Beyond a Boundary* is one of the finest and most finished books to come out of the West Indies, important to England, important to the West Indies. It has a further value: it gives a base and solidity to West Indian literary endeavour.

V. S. Naipaul

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Derek Walcott

Tarpon

At Cedros, thumping the dead sand
in spasms, the tarpon
gaped with a gold eye, drowned
thickly, thrashing with brute pain
this sea I breathe.
Stilled, its bulk,
screwed to the eye's lens, slowly
sought design. It dried like silk,
leisurely, altered to lead.
The belly, silver, leprous, bulged
like a cold chancre for the blade.
Suddenly it shuddered in immense
doubt, but the old jaw, gibbering, divulged
nothing but some new filaments
of blood. For every bloody stroke
with which a frenzied fisherman struck
its head my young son shook his head.
Could I have called out not to look
simply at the one world we shared?
Dead and examined in detail
a tarpon's bulk grows beautiful.

Bronze, with a brass-green mould, the scales
age like a corselet of coins,
a net of tarnished silver joins
the back's deep sea blue to the tail's
wedged, tapering Y.
Set in the stone, triangular skull,
ringing with gold, the open eye
is simply, tiringly there.
A shape so simple, like a cross
a child can draw it in the air.
A tarpon's scale, its skin's flake,
washed at the sea's edge and held
against the light, looks just like what
the grinning fisherman said it would.
Dense as frost glass but delicate,
etched by a diamond, it showed
a child's diagram of a ship,
the sails' twin triangles, a mast.
Can all immensity of shape,
all bulk, terror and fury fit
to a design so innocent,
since through opaque, phantasmal mist
moving but motionlessly, it
sails where imagination sent?

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

How to Control a Deviation

IS IT POSSIBLE to make comparative studies in the dynamics of doctrinal conflicts? It seems to me that a brief and selective analysis of the historical experience of one such movement, Catholicism, might contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of some recent developments within a contemporary international movement, Communism. Here are two organised international movements overtly committed to spreading and carrying out a doctrinal programme of action, theological or ideological, on the basis of both the individual commitments of their respective members and their collective goals as organised bodies. I should like to try to generalise from the experience of these organisations in handling deviations involving a unit of the movement differing or clashing either with the acknowledged centre, or with another unit of the movement—in both cases over theological or ideological issues, but within the common doctrine, and accompanied by mutual doctrinal recriminations.

I am convinced that there are pertinent implications in the doctrinal clashes between Rome and the Jansenites (and in the Jesuit missionaries' disputes with their Franciscan and Dominican critics in the 17th century) for the problems of unity and diversity which international Communism has recently encountered. Since the issue of Jansenism involved the relations between the French kingdom, with its strong emphasis on the Gallicanism of the French Church, and Rome, the first case has elements of a conflict between a nationally based doctrinal deviation and the centre. The second instance pertains to doctrinal-strategic conflicts between component units of the international movement.

IN BOTH CASES we are dealing with theological or ideological movements which are action-oriented. A theological or ideological dispute among their respective units is more than just a discussion of philosophical abstractions. Factors of political power and control inevitably become involved. Also, since in any doctrinal[1] bargaining there is no firm, "objective" way of determining the correctness of conflicting positions, a doctrinal dispute has a dynamic quality to it. Once it breaks out, a doctrinal compromise is extremely difficult to arrange. Splitting the difference as in financial transactions, selecting a river or a mountain range as in border disputes, accepting the line held when firing ceased as in armistices: all these devices are simply not applicable. Barring an outright split, the usual solutions tend to be more extreme: the agreement of one protagonist to become doctrinally silent, although not necessarily retracting his original views; or the doctrinal subordination of one to the other. A third solution, a mutual agreement to become silent, is not stable if one of the parties involved is in the centre; a doctrinally oriented movement cannot remain doctrinally silent in the face of continually changing reality.

The same consideration makes the commitment to silence on the part of deviationists also difficult to sustain. In time they must make doctrinal judgments, for the same reason that the movement as a whole cannot become silent, since doctrine rationalises and justifies its programme. When that happens, the choice is of either saying that which it was earlier unwilling to say—in effect, thereby capitulating—or re-opening the dispute. By way of example, Gomulka's 1956 implicit agreement to remain doctrinally silent was gradually translated into doctrinal capitulation. Tito and Khrushchev, after attempting in 1955–56 to effect something amounting to an agreement of mutual silence, both soon discovered that they were compelled to speak up, and so they clashed again. The Jansenists during the 17th century faced the same dilemma, since they also were attempting to wage a doctrinal conflict within the framework of a common doctrine and a common international organisation.

Power is heavily involved in these disputes. A concession on a doctrinal issue automatically magnifies the power and strengthens the prestige and even authority of one protagonist at the expense of the other. Furthermore a doctrinal dispute very frequently generates related conflicts. These may stir up, for instance, jurisdictional or organisational or personal issues, which then also intensify the doctrinal conflict. Indeed, in doctrinally-oriented organisations such conflicts in themselves usually stimulate doctrinal differences, since there is a strong temptation among doctrinally sensitive organisations to use the charge of doctrinal laxity (or some other imperfection) as a means of scoring a point in any disagreement.

In spite of this inherent dynamism of doctrinal conflict, there are also certain elements of stability to it. Usually, until quite some time after a deviation has become a defection or a defiance, the conflict tends to be limited by the mutual acceptance of a common value-system inherent in the doctrine; this tends to confine that conflict within the organisation and precludes alliances outside of it. For instance, the sharing of mutual animosity towards the "non-believers" is a persisting charac-

[1] For the purpose of brevity henceforth the word "doctrinal" will be used to cover both theological and ideological disputes, even though there are obvious differences between doctrine, theology, and ideology.

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teristic of doctrinal conflict. Furthermore, the common doctrine facilitates communication between protagonists. Certain moves are not only understandable but easily deciphered—hence the ambiguity inherent in conflicts between doctrinally antithetic protagonists (*e.g.*, "the enigma" of Communism in the eyes of the West) is limited.[2] Doctrinal conflict thus involves agreement and disagreement at the same time.

WHAT, THEN, are the aspects of the Church's history (of the 16th and 17th centuries[3]) and of to-day's Communism which provide the point of contact? The analogies I want to suggest are not meant to establish a rigid identity in behaviour but rather to unfold certain parallel trends. Perhaps it need not be added that the pace of events in our age is so rapid that changes involving mere decades must be equated with processes which in the past took several centuries to mature.

Nor do I want to imply any general equivalence between Catholicism and Communism. Indeed, a most vital and distinctive aspect of the activity of the Catholic Church, the spiritual, which defines the unique character of the Church as both a spiritual and a temporal institution, is altogether excluded from consideration. However, certain aspects of the social-political functions of the two movements are both sufficiently similar and unique to them to justify a joint analysis. Both movements see themselves as the exclusive standard-bearers of an absolutely correct and normatively all-embracing vision of reality. Both have been frequently tested in the defence of the purity of their doctrine. And, since almost nothing that occurs on this earth is seen as irrelevant to the doctrines of these organisations (although Catholicism recognises the realm of the morally neutral), both have been faced by the difficult task of developing their doctrinal storehouse to take into account changing social conditions. Both are inherently committed to proselytisation and are expansion-oriented. A static or defensive outlook is contrary to their internal nature, while their value-systems make the success of any one unit of the movement the source of satisfaction to the entire membership. This membership is exclusive, and both movements have jealously protected themselves against the free influx of groups claiming alleged identity of views.[4] Both are international, yet both have been frequently faced by the challenge of having to reconcile their claim to universality with the often intense impact of nationalism on their various memberships. Finally, both movements have a highly developed hierarchical power structure, they stress internal discipline, and possess a sophisticated bureaucratic apparatus which in itself generates an organisational compulsion towards application of the doctrine in practice.

Deviation involving the relations among some of these units, and not deviation within any one of them, is my subject. In the case of Catholicism in the 16th and 17th centuries, the principal units were, first of all, the centre of the organisation, the Papacy, with its highly developed bureaucratic apparatus and far-flung Papal Nuncios; the various Catholic kingdoms which in general accepted the principle of universal Catholic unity but with varying degrees of actual Papal intervention in their church matters;[5] the established Catholic universities, such as Louvain or the Sorbonne, which were very active in doctrinal discussions and which operated as corporate entities; the dioceses, particularly those ruled by strong-willed bishops anxious to assert the principle of internal episcopal independence from Rome; the various orders of the Church, such as the Jesuits, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, etc.

A systematic classification of the component units of international Communism would presumably include the various Communist-governed nation-states, and also the national Communist parties, as well as the centre of the movement, the CPSU.[6] These states differ in national power and are in various stages of doctrine-fulfilment (*i.e.*, some are still building "socialism" while others are more or less ahead). Some are truncated states, hence the expansion-orientation of their Communist élites is more intense. Some are indigenous Communist régimes while some are entirely dependent on Soviet support. Within the various ruling parties different shades of ideological orientation have developed in recent years, the extremes of which are generally described under the terms "revisionist" and "dogmatist". There are also strictly international functional Communist undertakings, such as the WFTU, etc.

Thus both international movements are composed of various political entities of asymmetrical strength, interacting and sometimes clashing within a common organisational-doctrinal framework.

PERHAPS it is not entirely accidental that these organisational-functional analogies are also matched by certain parallels in historical experience. By the late 16th and early 17th centuries the Church, and particularly the Papacy, was seeking new formulæ for doctrinal and organisational unity. Badly shaken by the Reformation which had split Christian unity, the Church was exposed to various cross-currents of reform, some seeking salvation in

[2] It could be argued that the failure of the West to appraise Communism in terms other than those traditional to the West helped Communism in the phase of its weakness. *Cf.* George Kennan, *History and the West* (New York, 1961).

[3] I have largely relied on L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* (32 vols., London, 1928–40).

[4] For this reason, both organisations have established exclusive standards for membership. *Cf.* Lenin's "Twenty-one Conditions" and, for example, the difficulties faced by the Chaldean monks in the 17th century.

[5] For instance, the French king and the French church always stressed the traditions of Gallicanism as a justified restraint on Papal power. See the lengthy treatment in L. Pastor, esp. vol. 32, pp. 246–325.

[6] For different definitions of its special position of primacy see the Twelve-Party Declaration of November 1957, and the Eighty-One Party Declaration of December 1960.

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new forms of organisation and behaviour, others turning to a fundamentalist, literalist reaffirmation of the doctrine. The emergence of absolutism, furthermore, meant that the Catholic world was increasingly becoming a composite of units each claiming domestic sovereignty. The universal Church in effect had become an international one, *i.e.*, composed of national units. The direct physical scope of Papal power became much more limited, and the problem of defining its limits and of somehow translating it into authority was a source not only of concern but also of tension within the Catholic world.

Communism has faced similar problems in the course of the last decade. Communism in one country expanded to twelve countries, thus becoming international. But the split with Tito, then Stalin's death, the crisis of 1956 and the self-assertion of China have limited the direct scope of Soviet power, despite nuclear weapons. The problem of defining the role of the CPSU within the changing bloc, and of coping with the revisionist and the dogmatist remedies for some of its ills, has been preoccupying Communist leaders over the last few years.

In both cases, perhaps the two most important antecedent developments, which subsequently shaped the histories of the respective movements in the above periods were (1) the emergence of highly centralised power within each, and (2) the crisis of unity, prompted in part by the internal deformations generated by the arbitrary and increasingly corrupt practices employed in the exercise of that power.

PAPAL POWER, including its use of physical coercion, grew rapidly in the late Middle Ages. Many factors contributed to its growth. The doctrine itself generated pressures, with the Petrine Texts of the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 23, providing the authoritative source for Papal supremacy over the other bishops.[7] The Crusades, with their mobilisation of doctrinal zeal, reinforced the special position of the Papacy, while the diplomatic initiatives of the Popes in gaining the support of European monarchs and in raising the necessary financial backing through indulgences and other means enhanced their special status. The appearance of military orders, independent of local parishes and dioceses, acknowledging only the sovereignty of the Pope, also contributed to Papal power. These were followed, on a larger and more enduring scale, by various mendicant orders, whose ordained members, circulating over Europe, gradually undermined the autonomy of the local bishops. Two great Catholic universities, Bologna and Paris, helped to develop the intellectual underpinnings of the Papal system. Under Pope Gregory IX, the principles of Papal supremacy were fully developed while in the Roman Curia the nucleus of an efficient and centralised bureaucracy was established. More generally perhaps, these developments can be viewed as a centralising drive inherent in any action-oriented organisation committed to an absolutist value-system.

Doubtless, the Inquisition also contributed to the consolidation and expansion of Papal power. The use of physical violence, frequently wielded by members of one of the mendicant orders, delegated by Rome directly, was vigorously applied against those accused of doctrinal error, defined in practice as deviation from the principles of faith laid down by the centre.[8] Much of the Inquisition was directed at the members of the movement itself. In spite of the opposition of some bishops—Bishop Wazo of Liège, Bishop Hildebart of Le Mans, Rupert of Deutz, and Saint Bernard—who warned that its practices would harm the Church, in time the Inquisition, especially the Spanish, mounted in intensity, employing tortures, requiring confessions, rendering judgment by administrative trials without defence for the accused, and applying sanctions against families of the accused.

From Luther to Tito

IN THE COMMUNIST CASE, too, an inherent tendency towards centralisation was operating, given the doctrines and the early organisational inclinations of the ruling groups.[9] The launching of the internal revolution in 1928–29, much like the Crusades, intensified internal zeal, while the gradual absorption of the Comintern and the purges of foreign Communists made the universally-oriented movement a Soviet-centralised one. In both cases, the centralisation and the application of physical violence led to corruption and internal decay.

Indeed, there are striking parallels between the processes and the effects of the Inquisition and of the Soviet purges of the 'thirties. Some Communist leaders, like Kirov, warned against the use of physical violence within the movement, but were overruled. The purges which followed swept the Communist party, using techniques similar to those

[7] Opposition to the Papacy was based on the argument that the earlier organisation of the Church involved equality of all bishops: "Without prejudice to its agreement with the Church Universal in all essential points, every church manages its own affairs with perfect freedom and independence, and maintains its own traditional usages and discipline, all questions not concerning the whole Church, or of primary importance, being settled on the spot.... Laws and Articles of faith, of universal obligation, are issued only by the full church, concentrated and represented at an Oecumenical Council." Janus, *The Pope and the Council* (London, 1869), pp. 85–86. (Janus, a 19th-century writer, was bitterly opposed to the doctrine of Papal infallibility.) A less one-sided source is the *Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge, 1957), Vols. IV, V.

[8] For example: "Savonarola's crime was disobedience to the Pope—and that Pope was Alexander VI. He was not a rebel against the apostolic See; but he was torn between the claims of obedience to God and submission to the orders of an unworthy Pope." W. Nigg, *Warriors of God* (New York, 1959), p. 278.

[9] *Cf.* L. Schapiro, *The Origins of the Communist Autocracy* (London, 1956).

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cited above.[10] And just as the Inquisitors made ample use of the charge of witchcraft to mobilise popular ignorance and suspicion, and particularly to take advantage of the susceptibility of the masses to prejudice, so too the Soviet secret police charged many purge victims with *vreditelstvo* or "wrecking."[11] It would be interesting to speculate at what stage a doctrinal movement undergoes such internal convulsions. Might it be when exhausted patience and growing scepticism prompt in some members a renewed quest for utopian fulfilment? At any rate, the effect of the purges was a further concentration of power at the centre. The fear of opposition intensified the violence, and the violence in turn intensified the fear.

In the case of the Church, the internal decay led to a challenge to centralised power and subsequently to the fracturing of the unity of the organisation. In the case of Communism the two events were telescoped closer together, with the unity fractured while centralised power still existed, but with that centralised power challenged shortly after disunity appeared. The Council of Constance (1414–18), already reflecting strong national differences, was a major effort to upset the power of the Curia, although its actual purpose was to elect one Pope in place of the three claimants. Its consequence was the doctrine of conciliar supremacy, which shortly afterwards was tested at the Council of Basle (1431). Although Papal power had been badly shaken, in that contest the Pope still prevailed. The split in Christian unity, effected a century later by the Reformation, came at a time when the movement was still basically centralised, although underneath the surface secular absolutism was setting the stage for the transformation of the Church from a single homogeneous unit into an international one. The Stalin-Tito break was in that sense remarkably similar, for it took place when Communism outwardly was united but in reality it, too, was becoming international, having absorbed a number of nation-states and having set up nationally-based Communist régimes in them.

NEITHER ORGANISATION handled its first major crisis of unity well, but each was to derive valuable lessons from it. At first both apparently thought that past methods would suffice to repel the challenge posed respectively by Luther in 1518 and Tito in 1948.

The Pope seems to have expected that branding Luther's views heretical and ordering him to appear in Rome (Papal citation of August, 1518) would dispose of the German cleric. Stalin, with the purges presumably still fresh in his memory, assumed that a mere condemnation of Tito's régime would topple the recalcitrant Yugoslav revolutionary. It is particularly striking that in both cases, the prospective deviants did not wish to deviate, and at first went to considerable pains to reassure the centre of their continued loyalty. However, the centre's insistence on continuing the dialogue with the deviating member[12] resulted in the further crystallisation of the deviant position as well as in increasing the personal stake of the would-be deviant in not becoming physically subject to the centre's power.

THE OPEN DEFIANCE and the split came rather quickly in both cases. An attempted compromise, engineered by von Miltitz, the Papal nuncio, and based in part on Luther's promise to observe silence if his opponent did also, failed in late 1518 for the reasons I have suggested earlier. Luther continued his defiance and in June, 1520, a Bull of Condemnation was issued and it was followed six months later by personal excommunication. (Allowing for problems of communication, the split was about as rapid as in the 1948 Stalin-Tito case.)

Both Luther and Tito found haven for their doctrinal defiance in national power. In both cases the centre, not accurately interpreting the changes that had taken place in their respective international movements, had not foreseen this contingency. Instead of either arranging for a quiet liquidation, then followed by an open condemnation of the improper views, or merely ignoring the alleged deviant, the centres in both cases moved precipitously, personalised the conflicts, thereby making conciliation more difficult, and then found themselves unable to cope with the alerted and properly entrenched defiers. It is likely that greater patience on the part of the centres (and particularly a refusal to engage in open dialogue) might have been more productive—especially since both Luther and Tito viewed themselves as merely attempting to invigorate their respective movements, were in some ways doctrinally more orthodox and more radical than their centres, and would have been unlikely to effect a split on their own. With time, and particularly with their deaths, the centripetal pressures inherent in the combination of absolutist doctrine and action might have sealed whatever breaches Luther's or Tito's excessive zeal could have effected.

The splits, accompanied by the more profound transformation of the two organisations, resulted in a quest for a new balance of unity and diversity and for new bases of central power. With Stalin's death, Communism experienced also a crisis of leadership and it has since been seeking some enduring definition of the centre's doctrinal authority.

[10] *Cf.* Z. Brzezinski, *The Permanent Purge—Politics of Soviet Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, 1956).

[11] Many credulous and semi-literate Soviet citizens, baffled by the dislocations caused by the first impact of the social revolution, probably swallowed the charge that some distinguished old Bolsheviks were derailing Soviet trains with the same seriousness with which their 13th and 14th-century counterparts accepted the accounts of "nocturnal meetings, where the devil appeared in the form of a toad, a pale spectre, and a black tomcat, [with] wicked abominations . . . practised."

[12] In the case of Luther, see the report of the official Roman *Censor Librorum* "In praesumptuosas M. Lutheri Conclusiones Dialogus," and Luther's "Responsio ad Silv. Prierietatis Dialogum," in which he, however, still accepted Papal authority. In Tito's case, see the Stalin-Tito correspondence, in Bass and Marbury, *The Soviet-Jugoslav Controversy, 1948–1958* (N.Y., 1959).

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Like the Kremlin until 1956, the Papacy had not needed an explicit and formal affirmation of its infallibility as long as it was enjoying some temporal power. With the decline of its physical power, pressures developed from within the Church, particularly from some of the orders (*e.g.*, the Jesuits), in favour of an explicit doctrinal assertion of Papal authority so as to protect the movement's organisational unity which further doctrinal divergences, like the one with Luther, could rupture. Furthermore, the tactical lessons of the Luther experience were not lost on the Church. In the handling of subsequent deviations it displayed far more sensitivity to the dangers inherent in doctrinal conflict and far greater skill in deviation control.

The Jansenist Reaction

THE CHURCH'S "deviation consciousness", acquired at the price of deviation transformed into open defiance, became apparent when Jansenism came to threaten Catholic unity and to defy the Pope's leadership throughout most of the 17th century.[13]

Jansenism can be seen as a fundamentalist reaction both to the internal decay which had caused the doctrinal split (the Reformation) and to some of the reform movements within the organisation (particularly the Jesuit movement) that became active after the split. Thus it bears strong resemblance to the dogmatists active in international Communism after the difficulties prompted by de-Stalinisation, reacting furiously against the remedies suggested by the revisionists, and using their attacks on the revisionists as a form of criticism of the centre.[14]

When Jansenism first appeared in the Lowlands, with the posthumous publication in 1640 of Cornelis Jansen's (Jansenius) major opus "Augustinus, Seu Doctrina . . . ," stirring a lively discussion in the circles associated with the University of Louvain (as well as a prompt Jesuit rejoinder), the official attitude of the centre was to discourage any doctrinal debates on the complex subject of Grace and Communion.[15] Thus both the Jansenist publications and the Jesuit attacks on them were criticised by Papal decree without, however, an explicit condemnation or affirmation of either. The centre's position was clearly one of avoiding a new doctrinal debate. However, the Jansenists were quick to exploit this restraint—much as the revisionists and the dogmatists did prior to the unity conference of 1957—as proof of the orthodoxy of their position. Citing copiously from Saint Augustine, they argued that their views represented the true principles of Christianity, as contrasted with the alleged doctrinal elasticity of the Jesuits.

Although the Louvain debates were vexing to the Church, Jansenism became a serious problem only when its principles were shortly afterwards adopted by a gifted French theologian, Antoine Arnauld, and popularised by him within the French church and influential French court circles. Sympathetic members of the clergy, including several bishops and at least one convent, in turn found support in the government, always ready to protect the Gallican Church (with its French way to heaven) against the encroachments of the centre. Arnauld, in his voluminous writings (he was a brilliant pamphleteer), and his adherents avoided attacking Rome, but concentrated their ire especially on the Jesuits who were said to be gradually undermining the true doctrinal foundations of the movement. Formally proclaiming their obedience to the Pope, the Jansenists thus made use of what we might call the "indirect-dialogue technique" and "the enemy-by-analogy" device to challenge the doctrinal interpretations of the centre. (Again, much like some of the recent Chinese and Albanian polemics against Moscow by way of the Yugoslav revisionists.) Similarly some of the French bishops, in the course of assuring Rome of their loyalty, and of Arnauld's, hinted that "certain persons" within the movement "instead of applying the true remedies to the decay of manners, had recourse to attenuations and palliations."

As Jansenism spread in France, the doctrinal debate over Grace inevitably led to a challenge to the authority and doctrinal infallibility of the centre. Both sides were still anxious to limit their rift. Thus anti-Jansenist critics avoided making explicit charges of heresy. Instead, they pointed to the operational harm of Jansenist views; for instance, Jansenist priests, because of their severity, were accused of having become divorced from the masses. This charge is strikingly similar to that

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[13] My principal sources have been Pastor, *The Popes*, vols. 29–32; M. Tollemache, *French Jansenists* (London, 1893); N. Abercrombie, *The Origins of Jansenism* (Oxford, 1936). Specialists in Church history will perhaps forgive me for this very sketchy treatment. Basically, the Jansenists, not unlike Calvinism, took a rather dim view of man's capacity to resist sin; they urged such intense and demanding standards before partaking of holy communion that many of them abstained from the sacrament for years at a time.

[14] It is interesting to note that much of the reform criticism came from the peripheries both in the case of Catholicism and Communism. Jansenism originated, as noted, in the Lowlands. Compare this with the criticisms of Communism by the Yugoslav Djilas, or the Hungarian Nagy, etc.

[15] The Jansenist principles were: "(1) some of God's commandments are impossible to just men who wish and strive to keep them considering the powers they actually have; the grace by which these precepts may become possible is also wanting; (2) in the state of fallen nature no one ever resists interior grace; (3) to merit, or to de-merit in the state of fallen nature we must be free from all external constraint, but not from interior necessity; (4) the Semipelagians admitted the necessity of interior preventing grace for all acts, even for the beginning of faith; but they fell into heresy in pretending this grace is such that man may either follow it or reject it; (5) to say that Christ died or shed his blood for all men is Semipelagianism." *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 8 (New York, 1913), p. 288.

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often made against the contemporary dogmatists.[16] Beyond that point, the centre was loath to go. Thus, when in 1654 Pope Alexander VII was urged by some of his advisors to publish a new Bull against Jansenism, he delayed, explaining that as long as the Jansenists did not explicitly defend the errors of Jansenius he "was unwilling . . . to drive them to fresh subterfuges and to a denial of Papal infallibility." The centre was not anxious to create a new heresy, which could conceivably prompt rash reactions from the most influential Catholic monarchy in Europe.

PAPAL RESTRAINT gave the Jansenists some margin for manœuvre. Enjoying at least the passive support of the French government, which viewed favourably those developments that might limit the Papacy's influence over French life, the Jansenists had no intention of detaching themselves from the Church. A defection on their own initiative would have posed a difficult dilemma for many French Catholics otherwise favourably inclined to them. Jansenism was thus more influential when still part of the organised movement. Its fundamentalist attitude had won over numerous sympathisers who pleaded their cause with the centre. Many concerned believers viewed them as dedicated reformers, anxious to restore a zealous church. (Doubtless, the same arguments among others have operated recently in criticising precipitous Soviet action against their Albanian or Chinese critics.) The Jansenists, furthermore, in spite of their doctrinal zeal, did not hesitate to point to the spectre of the Inquisition whenever Papal sanctions threatened (just as the contemporary dogmatists, whenever pressed, are quick to insist that true internationalism must prevail in the internal affairs of the Communist bloc). But above all, their major stress was on denying any novelty to their views; indeed, they frequently used the Dominican Order to prove the orthodoxy of their interpretations.[17] Arnauld kept reiterating that he was merely expounding the views of Saint Augustine, not of Jansenius. (The dogmatists rarely cite Stalin; they rely primarily on Lenin.) Even when Arnauld took the imprudent step of openly questioning Papal infallibility,[18] and the centre's sense of concern for organisational unity led the Pope (in August, 1656) to condemn explicitly Arnauld's writings, an outright rupture did not occur. A new spokesman for the Jansenists, Blaise Pascal, eloquently pleaded that there was no real disagreement with the centre because the allegedly heretical principles were in fact never uttered by either Jansenius or Arnauld, and that the whole affair was a Jesuit plot. The Jansenists thus simply refused either to submit or to leave the organisation.

At this point, the issue, already grown from the purely doctrinal realm to that of discipline, became complicated with the intrusion of the factor of national sensitivity. "Gallicanism became Jansenism's strongest ally"[19] (just as Chinese or Albanian nationalism doubtless buttresses the dogmatists' stand against Moscow). Thus "the Papal decisions were received with docility in so far as they concerned the sphere of faith, but as soon as the Pope attempted to intervene in any other way, Gallican susceptibilities were at once aroused in most alarming fashion." The centre's efforts to place before its tribunal four French bishops who had espoused Jansenism were effectively side-tracked by the French insistence that instead they be tried by 12 French bishops, who could be expected to reflect a polycentric organisational orientation.[20] The matter thus dragged on for years, until the death of Alexander VII. Bitterness built up on both sides and each hinted that the other had in effect betrayed the true faith.

The change in central leadership (which in Catholicism usually is handled more efficiently than in Communism) created a new situation. The successor, Clement IX, elevated in 1667 with French support, was quickly approached by the deviant churchmen who, while formally apologising, promptly blamed the rift on the Pope's predecessor. In effect, they seized the opportunity to try to reduce the quarrel to a merely posthumous personal issue.[21] Since both Rome and Paris were predisposed to compromise (and the Jansenists, as deviants, could only welcome it since it would keep them within the organisation), an arrangement, involving the *pro forma* submission of the recalcitrant bishops to Rome was hammered out in 1668–69. However, Rome was advised by its delegate not to publish anything which would make it appear as a total capitulation and to ignore evidence which suggested that the bishops' submission was insincere and very limited.[22] "In the end, Rome had to be content with the subscription of the four and to take its sincerity for granted. 'The Pope only judges of external actions,' Cardinal Rospigliosi observed. . . ." (Khrushchev might have said the same after obtaining Liu Shao-chi's signature to the December, 1960, declaration.) The strategy of conciliation thus involved a deliberately staged reciprocal ritual.

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[16] "Dogmatism and sectarianism . . . lead to the isolation of Communists from the masses. . . ." N. Khrushchev, speech of January 6, 1961.

[17] In this, too, there are contemporary parallels. For instance, the Albanians like to cite the Chinese on the subject of revisionism.

[18] But even here he equivocated somewhat. He thus made a distinction between infallibility of dogma and fact.

[19] Pastor, vol. 31, p. 216.

[20] Compare to the Soviet effort to restrict the discussion of Chinese dogmatism only to the bloc, and the Chinese insistence on the participation of 81 parties.

[21] This is what Khrushchev did in 1955–56 when he blamed Stalin for the quarrel with Tito; and this the Chinese might do after Khrushchev's death, or the Soviets after Mao's.

[22] Pastor, vol. 31, pp. 385–392. This arrangement bears great resemblance to the Tito-Khrushchev compromise whereby the Yugoslavs acted as if the Soviets had repudiated all the Cominform declarations, while the Soviets knew that this was not the case but remained silent. Similarly, when Rome placed on the Index a prayer book written by one of the pro-Jansenist French bishops, the Papal nuncio did not publish the decree in France.

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THE SHORT-RANGE EFFECT of the "Clementine peace" was to legitimise continued Jansenist activity in France and even to facilitate its growth. The centre, however, persevered in its policy of moderation, maintaining silence while still fully encouraging various other units of the organisation (in this case, the Spanish and Hungarian clergy) to condemn the French deviation. Skirmishes and occasionally bitter clashes continued, but the Jansenists were fighting a losing battle. With Arnauld's death in 1694 the doctrinal mantle passed to Pasquier Quesnel but even pro-Jansenist writers conceded that Jansenism was in its decline. With the doctrinal vigour of the deviation weakened by the death of its most vigorous spokesman and with its influence on the French monarchy waning, more energetic measures of suppression could be applied. Early in the 18th century two Papal bulls condemned Jansenism and the French royal authorities no longer opposed their enforcement. The issue was simply no longer a crucial one and the fundamentalist zeal had expended itself. Isolated pockets of Jansenism persisted but on a socially insignificant scale.

It could be argued perhaps that the centre's policy of restraint and covert manipulation had weakened the doctrinal cohesion of the movement's organisation. But the alternative which had been avoided was that of a split. It had been skirted because the highly doctrinaire deviant had an inherent inclination not to cast himself out of the common fold; while the centre, aware that France might be lost if the deviation became defiance, played the game in such a manner as not to destroy all the binding elements. This meant, of course, that the deviant enjoyed a measure of impunity. At the same time his oft-proclaimed loyalty to the centre was bound to become politically operative when the divisive issues ultimately lost their conflict-fed sense of urgency.

Jesuits in China

BEFORE TURNING to the general implications of the foregoing, a briefer survey of another aspect of the Church's history in that period is revealing. Catholicism in the 16th–17th centuries, much as Communism to-day, seemed to have reached its zenith in Europe, and increasingly it saw its fulfilment in what to-day would be called the underdeveloped lands. Missionary work, particularly in the Orient, seemed full of promise. The Chinese Empire offered a particularly appealing target and late in the 16th century the first Jesuit missionaries succeeded in penetrating its hitherto sealed frontiers.[23]

Conscious of the intense Chinese self-esteem and xenophobia, the Jesuits proceeded with utmost caution and discretion. Since foreigners were generally not allowed to settle within the Empire, and since foreign proselytisers were certain to be kept out, the Jesuit fathers carefully avoided any specific identification with Christianity and in their petition to the Chinese authorities, seeking the right to settle in China, they (in the words of Father Ricci)

> explained that they were members of a religious order, who had left their native land over distant seas, attracted by the fame of the Chinese Empire . . . that they intended to remain here for the rest of their lives, and that all they wanted was a small plot of ground to build a house, and also a church in honour of the King of Heaven. . . . Neither in this request nor in any other way was any mention made of Christianity. . . .

The Jesuits were quick to adapt themselves to Chinese customs, applying their founder's injunction that

> we may *ad bonum* approve or agree with someone in regard to some one thing that is good, passing over other bad points, and thus by winning his confidence we further our good object; by going in with him we come out with ourselves.

They tolerated Chinese ancestor-worship on the grounds that it merely involved filial veneration, and they praised Confucius as a wise philosopher. After a quick appraisal of the Chinese social-political structure, the Jesuits adopted the dress, the customs, and the status of the *literati* and cultivated the upper classes. In their appeal to them, the Jesuits at first avoided outright proselytisation, but instead attempted to impress the Chinese with European science and gadgets. For example, they gained the right to establish residence in the province of Canton by presenting a mechanical clock (a device unknown in China) to the governor. Later, having gained entry into Peking through the presentation of similar gifts to the king, "the esteem which the Jesuits enjoyed at the Imperial Court grew still further when, in 1610, they foretold the date of an eclipse of the moon with greater accuracy than the native astronomers." Father Ricci himself at various stages of his remarkable mission overcame Chinese suspicions by making for them detailed maps and globes of the world (and carefully putting China in the middle so as not to hurt Chinese self-esteem); by presenting their dignitaries with clocks and watches; by installing a large clock on the outside of his mission so that people could admire it; by teaching advanced astrology and mathematics to the Chinese scholars. In his memoirs, in a chapter entitled, "Mathematics and Converts," he states that

> whoever may think that ethics, physics, and mathematics are not important in the work of the Church, is unacquainted with the tastes of the Chinese, who are slow to take a salutary

[23] For a fascinating account of Jesuit efforts in China, see *China in the Sixteenth Century: the Journals of Matthew Ricci, 1583–1610* (New York, 1953). An interesting statement of the tactical problems faced by the Jesuits is in P. Duignan, "Early Jesuit Missionaries: A Suggestion for Further Study," *The American Anthropologist*, August, 1958.

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spiritual potion, unless it be seasoned with an intellectual flavouring.[24]

IT IS EVIDENT that the "soft sell" technique of the Soviet technical missions is neither original nor novel. Contemporary Soviet policy towards the underdeveloped lands is clearly premised on a similarly sophisticated appreciation of the depth of national sensitivities. The Soviets, by and large, have toned down direct ideological propagandisation, and they calculate that Communist doctrinal advances will be a function of demonstrated Soviet technical skill. They have been de-emphasising the revolutionary ethic, and have been concentrating on winning over the "national bourgeoisie," *i.e.*, the intellectual-political élite. Not revolutionary peasant armies but rather Soviet-trained intellectuals, mesmerised by Soviet technical achievements, will lead these nations into socialism. The similarity in the relationship of Father Ricci's clocks and astrology to Catholicism and of the sputniks and cosmonauts to Communism is striking.

THE PARALLEL goes further, since these moves provoked severe charges of doctrinal laxity within both international movements.

Just as the Chinese Communists have given evidence of their displeasure with the Soviet approach towards the neutralist and underdeveloped lands,[25] so the Franciscan and Dominican missionary orders looked askance at the Jesuit methods in China and India, and, traditionally emphasising other aspects of the common doctrine, they saw in these methods dangerous signals of heresy. Their suspicions were especially easily aroused since the orders had earlier differed (as the Soviets and Chinese recently have) on matters pertaining to internal reforms within the movement's organisation. Thus, for example, the Dominican Alfonso de Avendano had spent 17 years (1577–94) preaching that the Jesuits were "secret heretics, hypocrites, and pharisees." Some Dominicans, furthermore, had been sympathetic to the Jansenists. The feeling was widespread among many Catholics that the Jesuits "adapted their teachings too freely to the spirit of the world. . . ." Moving into the Orient, the Franciscans, therefore, proceeded to apply their own more direct strategy:

> Crucifix in hand they preached in the open streets and public places, condemned to the deepest hell Confucius . . . and proclaimed that every kind of veneration of ancestors was unlawful; the Jesuits' caution with regard to Confucius and the veneration of ancestors they condemned as connivance at idolatry.[26]

It may be assumed that the predominance of the Spanish Conquistador tradition among the Franciscans and Dominicans had something to do with their attacks on the predominantly Portuguese and Italian Jesuit missionaries. National differences thus probably intensified the tension.

Although the Franciscan methods quickly backfired by provoking Chinese violence, the debate persisted. In effect, the centre was faced with the now familiar question of determining the proper balance between the universal and the particular. Wisely, however, no quick decisions were reached. The matter was deliberated. Missions travelled to and from the Orient (consuming years in the process). Commissions were appointed. The formal solutions finally adopted by Rome tended towards compromise: in 1645 the Jesuits suffered a setback; in 1651 they recouped some of their losses. However, just as the Jesuits effectively argued after 1645 that the centre had not been apprised of all the relevant facts, so after 1651 the other orders similarly felt that the concessions now granted to the Jesuits were based on improper information, and they simply would not take advantage of such doctrinal shortcuts. But with time, they gradually relented as practice showed the advantages of Jesuit efforts.

SEVERAL FACTORS HELPED to contain the dispute, even though some outraged spokesmen at times had already charged heresy. (It is to be remembered that the issues involved were of very great doctrinal import even though superficially they may have seemed only matters of tactics.) The acceptance by the parties involved of the centre's judgment as doctrinally authoritative established a certain common frame of reference (even if the respective parties tried subsequently to evade surreptitiously the centre's decisions). Recognition of Papal authority automatically meant the acceptance of arbitration as the method for resolving doctrinal issues. Secondly, the *esprit de corps* of the organisation and the dedication of its member units to a common value system in which the specific success of one unit reflected glory on the movement as a whole meant that doctrinal issues which could be

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[24] Elsewhere Ricci says: "The Fathers have made an effort to merit a reputation for learning, not as a matter of vain glory but with a view to the end for which they came here, namely to further the cause of Christianity, which on all occasions they purposely weave into their conversations." (Similar techniques were employed by the Jesuits, under Roberto de Nobili, in their approach to Indian Brahmins.)

[25] Compare "Present-day leftism in the Communist movement is also manifested in both concealed and overt resistance to the Communist parties' policy of establishing collaboration with working people in the ranks of the social-democratic, Catholic, and various other bourgeois-radical parties and organisations" (*Sovietskaya Rossiya*, June 10th, 1960); and the warning contained in *Kommunist* (No. 13, 1960) against those who exaggerate revolutionary feelings and "call for direct revolutionary overthrow," with the following Chinese statements: "History teaches us that people's revolutions in all countries stem from the needs of the people and are the result of the development of class struggle" (*Red Flag*, No. 20–21, 1960), and "The modern revisionists and certain representatives of the bourgeoisie try to make the people believe that it is possible to achieve socialism without a revolutionary party. . . . This is sheer nonsense and deception" (*Red Flag*, No. 8, 1960).

[26] Pastor, vol. 29, p. 250.

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tested in action (as contrasted to purely abstract ones) were not easily translatable into overt doctrinal ruptures. Thirdly, the centre's handling of the problem (in part due to the slowness of communications and bureaucratisation) was deliberate, which created a safety-valve and made compromises possible. Lastly, the passage of time demonstrated quietly the superiority of one method over another, thereby also helping to control potential deviationism.

A 17th-century outside observer might have expected a different outcome. An imaginary analyst, employed either by an interested non-Catholic power in, for instance, A-CIA (The Anti-Catholic Information Association) or, let us say, by the Constantinople CAND (Catholic Analysis and Development Centre) might have quickly dismissed the common doctrine as "an irrelevant factor" to his analysis, especially since, being external to it, he would find it difficult to grasp the doctrine's special universalising function of self-identification. The analyst, furthermore, would have been very conscious of the relatively recent split in Catholicism, and might hence have tended to interpret every limited scrap of evidence, culled from Jansenist pamphlets or from discreet Jesuit or Franciscan "leaks," as signalling the likelihood of a new rupture. Internal doctrinal deviation coupled with evidences of internal strategic differences, based in part on nationalism, would have seemed to "augur a dark future" for the international movement's organisational unity.

The Skilful Deviant

PERHAPS certain lessons relevant to analysis of developments within contemporary Communism are to be learned from this very brief survey. They may even serve as a modest point of departure towards a "doctrinal conflict and deviation-control manual."

International Communism, a doctrinally oriented movement of various nationally based Communist parties, is inevitably involved in perpetual internal bargaining designed to establish common doctrines, common strategies, and to resolve conflicting interests or views. The CPSU is still by far the most powerful and authoritative party.[27] Its basic preoccupation is with minimising doctrinal divisions and with preventing any one unit from assuming the stance of outraged doctrinal self-righteousness. Harmonious unity avoids situations which could lead to a challenge to that primacy. On the other hand, the various other units, and particularly those which have some claim to speak authoritatively, especially the CCP, by adopting doctrinally deviant positions and arguing about them with the centre, indicate clearly that their purpose is to persuade the centre to change its position even while preserving internal organisational unity. The very fact of argument indicates absence of a desire to defect but also signals the possibility of a challenge to unity. However, the dynamic of argument can subsequently generate sufficient heat to cause defiance, or defection, or condemnation, *i.e.*, the process of escalation.

The weaker but skilful deviant, therefore, especially in the beginning, acts as if there were no distinction between his and the centre's doctrinal position, even if he should suspect that the centre has strayed from the "truth." On the contrary, he studiously and monotonously reiterates his allegiance to the movement, while appealing to some earlier and mutually respected source of its doctrine. This forces the centre either to tolerate the deviation, allowing it perhaps to spread—or to take the first step in joining the issue, in effect launching a process of argument which it naturally would prefer to avoid. The skilful deviant makes the choice difficult by his strategy of ambiguity—always implying the possibility of his returning to the position of doctrinal subordination while gradually consolidating his position and probing the international movement for other sources of support. This prevents the centre from issuing public threats since the issuance in itself implies conflict and, with the centre presumably wishing not to precipitate conflict, forces the centre into silence. Informal threats, on the other hand, can be deflected by the deviant through equivocation, requests for further explanation, etc.

The deviant, furthermore, may protect himself against the centre, by using his assets of weakness or of fanaticism or both.

"The asset of weakness" involves pleading sympathy with the centre's doctrinal position but inability to enforce it. Thus the centre is faced with a situation in which the alleged deviant pleads doctrinal orthodoxy in principle but deviates doctrinally in practice. The choice then is whether to punish the deviant for a situation which he, indeed, perhaps truly may not be able to control. For instance, the University of Louvain pleaded lack of competence to enforce a Papal Bull against the Jansenists while not questioning the validity of the Bull. Similarly, Gomulka accepted in principle socialism in agriculture but pleaded that he could not enforce collectivisation.[28]

"The asset of fanaticism," i.e., being more doctrinally extreme than the centre restrains the centre by implying to it that the deviant "has his heart in the right place but is a little extreme." The effect is

[27] There is an inclination in some quarters to exaggerate the present power of the CCP. It is to be remembered that China's general backwardness, over-population, economic difficulties, etc., all place it in a position vis-à-vis the USSR analogous in many respects to that of India vis-à-vis the United States in the non-Communist world. It is curious that when India is discussed its over-population is normally mentioned as a factor of weakness. When talk shifts to China, then the same factor is normally mentioned as proof of China's power.

[28] The centre can also use this dodge to protect itself against claims. For instance, the public Soviet emphasis on achieving a higher standard of living can be seen as a form of commitment to a third party (*i.e.*, its own people) which makes it difficult for the Soviet Union to respond fully to the demands of its allies for economic aid. *E.g.*, when China demands greater aid, the Soviet leadership can point to its public commitment as an excuse for not giving it.

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similar to that achieved by the advantage of ignorance in a mixed-motive game "if it is recognised and taken into account by an opponent."[29] Furthermore, within a doctrinally oriented movement the fanatic usually can protect himself by "literalism," *i.e.*, by citing texts, thereby forcing the centre into the more difficult position of having to prove that its own novel interpretations, often necessitated by changing social conditions, are still in "the proper spirit" of the doctrine.[30] The fanaticism, furthermore, carries with it a degree of commitment which may inhibit the centre's reaction out of fear of prompting an irrational defiance by the deviant.[31] Indeed, under certain circumstances, it may even be advantageous for one of the protagonists, usually the weaker, to acquire some uncertainty about himself in order to minimise predictability: *e.g.*, the alleged Jesuit reputation for "duplicity" or the inscrutability and vagueness of the Chinese Communists. (Apparently the Soviets have complained that the Chinese use of aphorisms is complicating "comradely" discussions.)

LASTLY, THE DEVIANT in order to support his position can mobilise non-doctrinal commitments which then are cloaked in the doctrinal mantle. It is noteworthy that Luther, Arnauld, Tito, Mao, and Hoxha, all of whom would consider themselves as strict exponents of the doctrine, used nationalism as a source of power to buttress their doctrinally deviant positions.

In responding skilfully, the centre must be careful to take advantage of those factors in the posture of the deviant which inhibit the potentially dynamic escalation of deviation into defiance or defection.[32] As long as the deviant acknowledges the principle of organisational unity, the organisation enjoys a long-range advantage. Deviants die, the organisations go on. But if the centre abandons self-restraint, and cuts off the heretical limb before waiting for it to wither, the limb may sprout its own roots and grow into a tree. That was Stalin's mistake with Tito which Khrushchev has so far avoided with Mao. An open condemnation, furthermore, involves an irrevocable doctrinal commitment, creating a gulf which subsequently may be very difficult to bridge without the outright capitulation of one of the parties. Khrushchev discovered this when seeking a reconciliation with Tito.

Restraint, furthermore, is more advisable in the case of fanatical, fundamentalist deviants than in the case of those who wish to moderate and dilute the doctrine. The former, in the final analysis, can still be counted as adherents to the common doctrine in terms of still being *against* (and even more so) the common enemy. In the latter case, the shift is toward the camp of the enemy. But even in the latter case, the deviant is normally very careful to avoid any identification with the enemy. As long as this is the case, the internally unifying doctrinal self-identification still exercises pressures for unity.[33]

AN OPEN CONDEMNATION of doctrinal heresy should either accompany or follow the physical liquidation of the deviant. Issuing it in the expectation that it will cause his liquidation or submission is not likely to be effective if the deviant enjoys local, nationally based organisational backing and is given no choice but to mobilise it for the defence of his position and life. Rather, since early in the game the deviant normally wishes to avoid a schism (but is also concerned with proving to his own local organisation that it must swim or sink with him), and since furthermore there are normally groups within his organisation which would like to displace him and can take advantage of the

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[29] T. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 161.

[30] Khrushchev had to face this difficulty in 1960 when criticised by the Chinese. He responded that "If we act like children who, studying the alphabet, compile words from letters, we shall not go very far. Marx, Engels, and Lenin created their immortal works which will not fade away in centuries.... On the basis of the teaching of Marxism-Leninism we must think ourselves, profoundly study life, analyse the present situation and draw the conclusions which benefit the common cause of Communism." (Speech of June 21st, 1960.)

The more "revisionist" the position, the more difficult it is to resist "literalist" criticisms. The Chinese warned that "as pupils of Lenin and as Leninists, we must utterly smash all attempts of the modern revisionists to distort and carve up the teachings of Lenin" (*Red Flag*, No. 8, 1960).

[31] This gives the physically weaker but more extreme deviant a bargaining advantage. If, for instance, in the Sino-Soviet dispute the Soviet and Chinese preferences were as follows:

Soviet

(1) Only Moscow speaks for the movement on doctrinal issues.
(2) Neither speaks; *i.e.*, agreement to silence.
(3) Both speak; *i.e.*, open dispute.
(4) Only Peking speaks; *i.e.*, capitulation.

Chinese

(1) Only Peking speaks....
(2) Both speak; *i.e.*, open dispute.
(3) Neither speaks.
(4) Only Moscow speaks; *i.e.*, capitulation.

then, using game theory, the advantage would rest with the Chinese. See R. D. Luce and H. Raiffa, *Games and Decisions* (New York, 1958), pp. 146–149, for alternative mathematical calculations of relative scales of advantage.

[32] The centre must watch out against the danger that a precipitous condemnation of the deviant can actually force distantly potential deviants into deviation. For instance, the Dominicans feared that condemnation of Jansenism would reflect on them (Pastor, vol. 29, p. 118). Might not some Communist parties object to an explicit condemnation of the dogmatists for fear that this would reflect on them as well?

[33] It is revealing that after the Suez crisis, the British Conservative and Labour Parties were also much more lenient with their respective "fundamentalist" deviants than with their "moderates." See L. D. Epstein, "British M.P.s and their Local Parties: the Suez Cases," *American Political Science Review* (June, 1960).

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friction with the centre to attempt to do so, it is to the centre's advantage to pose as the moderate party seeking reconciliation. Doctrinal arguments, even if covert, lead to the doctrinal crystallisation of the deviant's position, which tends to be quite rigid once it has taken shape. Restraint gives opposition elements within the deviating local unit an opportunity to argue that their deviant leadership is recklessly and unnecessarily rupturing the international organisation's unity. A useful device here might be to invite the deviating leader for conversations with the centre. This puts the option up to him—to refuse to go is to take the initiative in splitting; to go is to take a certain personal risk.[34] The desirable quality of ambivalence in this invitation would be increased if the past record could not provide the deviant with much certainty of either a safe return home or an untimely demise.

Moderates and Fanatics

As long as the deviant still sees himself as part of a doctrinally bound family, fear of isolation is a powerful restraining factor available to the centre. Just as Rome took advantage of the loyalty of the peripheries to subtly restrain the French, so Moscow in 1960 attempted to isolate the Chinese and the Albanians. Here the fanatics are more vulnerable than the moderates since they have nowhere else to go. For this reason an outright condemnation should be delayed, while the fear of it, to which even a deviant is susceptible since he still sees himself as sharing in the common undertaking, should not be diluted by threats. Besides, partial direct reactions (*e.g.*, counter-arguments) on the centre's part have the double disadvantage of suggesting weakness and of stimulating further disagreement. Thus, the suspended and undiluted fear of condemnation is a better deterrent in a situation which has no easy way out. This may be true even if the deviant, aware of his importance (*e.g.*, China) doubts that the centre would take such an extreme step. He may doubt it but he cannot be certain. Dilution increases his security and hence impunity.

Indirect and ostensibly irrelevant reactions are another weapon of doctrinal conflict (in addition to the techniques of "indirect-type dialogue" and "enemy-by-analogy" already mentioned). Avoiding any *direct* relevance to the issues at stake and formally maintaining the position that no disagreement is involved, such reactions can convey the centre's displeasure without permitting the deviant to assume the pose of the aggrieved party and to mobilise local support which becomes convinced that it has no choice but to resist the centre. Slowing down economic aid, granting fewer honours (but still granting *some*), addressing anniversary greetings to the unit but failing to mention its leaders, downgrading the deviant's doctrinal standing—these are insufficient to provoke a rupture but can weaken the internal position of the deviant and provoke factional struggle within his realm. Furthermore, if the issue is sufficiently acute, it may be advisable to select some insignificant section of the international movement for forceful condemnation and destruction as a lesson to others. Failure to liquidate rapidly and physically the moderate Gomulka in 1956 (which presumably could have been done, although at unpredictable risks) gave the fanatical Hoxha a certain amount of security in 1961.[35]

But even if the centre decides to take such an indirect, but extreme, step as condemning Hoxha to influence the behaviour of the more important Mao, it is still desirable to find means of giving Mao some advance warning, sufficiently ambiguous to prevent a counter-warning but clear enough so that the step itself cannot be subsequently interpreted as an effort to take Mao by surprise. Irrevocable, surprise moves, such as a sudden condemnation, intensify the conflict by eliminating the stabilising factor of mutual anticipation. They are only desirable in a post-defiance or defection situation, *i.e.*, in a case of outright conflict.

The foregoing "praxeology"[36] of deviation control is derived from the mixed-motives character of doctrinal conflict.

Significantly, in such conflict the opponents have generally tried to keep their disagreements confidential. Sometimes, even after a doctrinal rupture, they have co-operated in protecting the internal secrets of the movement from "outsiders." Secrecy not only gives them a certain flexibility and allows them room for manœuvre; its cause is more deep-seated than that. It is rooted in their mutually shared sense of distinctiveness as compared to the rest of the world, and in the self-restraint imposed on them also by the very existence of that world. Both China and the USSR think of the United States every time they exchange mutual accusations, and the United States cannot help but restrain deviationist tendencies within Communism. Furthermore, if the movement as a whole is experiencing the self-invigorating sense of fulfilment in its mission of world expansion, the divisive tendencies within tend to be submerged by the political momentum of its forward thrust and by the emotional satisfaction of personal triumph on the part of the individual members.

The stabilising effects inherent in the common doctrine (which provides a mutually understood framework for communication) and of the conflict-limiting factor of distinctiveness (which makes alliances outside the doctrine very difficult) are at their greatest if the international organisation possesses an acknowledged doctrinal arbiter. An organisation built around an absolute dogma requires this arbiter to avoid splits. The church as an organisation sought him by rooting Papal

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[34] Arnauld, Luther, Tito refused; Gomulka went in 1956; Hoxha apparently hesitated. Many of Gomulka's friends urged him not to go.

[35] This has resulted in a paradoxical situation whereby Tito, who was (until recently) outside the Communist orbit, is closer to Khrushchev than Hoxha, who is within it.

[36] The fullest and most systematic treatment of the nature of praxeology (principles of correct, rational decisions) is in T. Kotarbinski, *Traktat o dobrej robocie* (Warsaw, 1955).

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authority in the dogma of infallibility. Indeed Catholicism probably preserved itself as a major unified force by taking that step. Otherwise, it might have become a loose federation of various national units, with very differing doctrinal commitments. Stalin's infallibility derived only from an authority which rested primarily on power, and the remaining vestiges of both were destroyed by Khrushchev in 1956. One may justifiably speculate (leaving Soviet considerations apart) whether Khrushchev's position with *international* Communism would not have been stronger to-day if he had not destroyed the element of legitimacy in his own past Stalinism and in his successorship to Stalin.

As it is, the recent divisions between the Chinese and the Soviets, while still restrained by the factors mentioned above, necessarily become contests for doctrinal primacy. The relationship is thus different from the Franciscan-Jesuit conflict which could ultimately be resolved through their mutual recognition of Papal authority, just as the 1957 tensions of the East Germans and the Czechs with the Poles could be arbitrated by Moscow (especially after the November, 1957, reaffirmation of Soviet leadership). The ability of the Chinese to act in spite of Soviet guidance, and the eventual proclamation in December, 1960, of the CPSU's *non-leadership* mean that doctrinal divisions can no longer be effectively arbitrated, but only negotiated, within the organisation. This is a politically grave liability, inhibiting expeditious deviation control.

Another difficulty which both international movements have experienced involves the tendency I have already noted for doctrinal deviations to support themselves on a national basis. Since nationalism is still intense, and since international Communism is composed of nation-states and nationally based parties, Communism is particularly exposed to its challenge. Stalin's solution, to put it most simply, was to suppress it. Yet by replacing the original international and intellectual leadership with a new generation of essentially peasant bureaucrats, Stalin created in effect the first "nationalist" Communist state which, in turn, developed a strong tradition of chauvinism. As a result, the Soviet leaders lacked the tradition of flexibility and adjustment, and particularly the spirit of true internationalism which would have contributed to easing the relationships within the Communist community (especially once other sources of independent state power had been created).

The Future of Doctrine

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, it may be worth remembering that deviation is the rule in doctrinally oriented international movements. It is difficult to conceive of circumstances in which such an international movement, action-oriented and composed of a variety of homogeneous units, each with a special interest, national perspective, and power, could avoid internal doctrinal conflicts, with some units deviating one way or another.

The ebb and flow of this persisting condition can be described as a dynamic state of *divergent unity*. This condition arises because the movement cannot avoid the process of differentiation, which is a function both of scale and of its having become an international organisation. A triumphantly expanding doctrinal movement, with an allegedly universally valid programme, can be said to go successively through a stage of universalisation, with its principles accepted or imposed almost *in toto* on other societies. Then, when these societies develop their own doctrinal élites, there is a stage of particularisation. The clash of the two, with its occasionally painful adjustments, may result in the retention of the universal doctrine and of unity, but with a far greater degree of diversity permitted within the international movement. Otherwise, the alternative is an open split. The common but originally absolutist doctrine thus gradually becomes relativised.

This relativisation slowly dissipates doctrinal vitality. It vitiates the sense of distinctiveness from non-members, and weakens fanaticism. More than this, it can in turn cause within some units of the international organisation a process of erosion of the doctrine to the point where the doctrine gradually becomes an empty, formal vessel, even if currency is still given to some time-honoured slogans. At the same time, in others, by a process of reaction, it may then prompt outraged doctrinal revivalisms and, depending on the nature of the general world context, cause more or less intense clashes. On the whole, it may be said that the inherent and normal deviations are (1) least likely to generate acute conflicts when the movement is engaged offensively and is successful; (2) more so when the movement is on the defensive; (3) most likely in conditions of frustrating stalemate.

Till now, the relatively rare cases of major defection or expulsion have not only occurred in conditions of relative stalemate. But they probably could have been avoided if the parties involved, especially the centre, had been less inept and more flexible. Finally, both parties have usually regretted the split, especially since an expansion-oriented doctrinal movement cherishes its dynamic sense of statistical or territorial growth. A break inescapably involves a doctrinally embarrassing retrogression, and experience has shown that it is very hard to repair.

Provided the leaders exercise a minimum of skill in deviation-control, along the lines sketched above, splits can be avoided. At the same time, the very appearance of divergent unity, with its reliance on deviation control to prevent splits, is a reflection of the very gradual underlying process of differentiation, relativisation, and erosion. Each successful case of deviation control involves perhaps only a small measure of further doctrinal relativisation. But it still always involves some. Through this relativisation the doctrinal movement as a whole eventually may lose some of its overt militancy. It appears that deviations, contained but not crushed, are the hand-maidens of history, stimulating the inevitable internal evolution of doctrinal movements.

In the Sino-Soviet case, however, and quite unlike the Catholic experience, the debate from the very beginning was handled very badly by both sides. They conducted the conflict as a political warfare operation, applying the strategy of conflict rather than the craft of deviation control. Instead

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of skilful manipulation (according, say, to the principles outlined above), both sides strove to achieve tactical surprises and long-range strategic gains. The Soviets presented the Chinese with sudden *faits accomplis* at the Bucharest conference, at the 22nd CPSU Congress, and at the East German Congress in 1962. The Chinese, on the other hand, issued a series of extremely well-argued but highly inflammatory ideological declarations, implicating the Soviet leadership in "revisionism" and eventually even questioning the ideological legitimacy of the Soviet system itself. Consequently, instead of controlling deviation, the inept handling of the conflict contributed to its escalation, clearly in spite of the original intent of both sides.

This "manual" on the praxeology of deviation control may well have appeared too late to be of much help to Messrs. Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

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LETTERS

Oakeshott

THOSE READERS of ENCOUNTER who read Dr. Bernard Crick's review-portrait of Professor Michael Oakeshott in your June number may also like to have another opinion. To many of those of us who have worked with Michael Oakeshott during his years at L.S.E., including several who, like myself, are very much nearer in political opinion to Dr. Crick than to Professor Oakeshott, the Crick picture seems to be no more than a malevolent caricature.

WILLIAM PICKLES

London School of Economics

The Universities

I HAVE READ Noel Annan's paper with very great interest. I agree with almost everything he has to say and I therefore find it rather hard to comment on it except by saying that I admire his courage in saying what he has said. It would certainly be difficult to add anything to the case which Mr. Annan has so adequately made.

I was equally impressed by Mr. Crossman's article on "Machine Politics". As it happened I had been talking to him in the House of Commons about a week before and he impressed me by being able to quote from Lloyd George's famous minute of September 4th, 1919. There seems to be something quite fundamentally wrong with the organisation and the Establishment which controls both the Universities and the greater entity of which they form a part.

One of the incidental consequences of the reform of the Civil Service which Mr. Lloyd George initiated so long ago seems to have been that any man who stays long enough in a Department to master his brief is suspect by his colleagues, and is regarded as a dedicated man and felt to be dangerous. In these days when almost everything which has to be administered is so infernally complicated and demands such a depth of detailed understanding, this state of mind seems to me to be appallingly dangerous and calculated to ruin the economy of the country as a whole. I think you should try and get someone to write about the Amateur Administrator and compare him with the professionals who have come to power in France and in America. This curious attitude has been current in England for many years. I encountered it for the first time during the war when I found that American Naval Officers in charge of technical matters were much better able to discharge their functions than were their English contemporaries. They were in fact professionals and our men equally obviously were not; it is only in the last few weeks that I have come to

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realise how far this attitude of mind permeates the whole Government machine. Do you think you could find someone to do justice to this particular theme? It alarms me but I do not know enough about the background to be able to do justice to it myself.

I think perhaps the main omission from Mr. Annan's paper is that he has ignored (as one would have expected him to do) the peculiar problems of engineering and technology and the difficulty of associating the work of the universities with the research and development which is done in industry and the great Government establishments. The facilities which some of these places have at their disposal are vast and could not possibly be duplicated in the Universities, and I fear that much of the research work which is done in universities is apt to be vitiated by the sense that it is being done as it were in a vacuum regardless of the urgent needs of the time, and that it is "academic", using that word in a pejorative sense.

I believe that other countries have tackled this problem more successfully than we have and that the continental system of technological universities and of part-time extraordinary professors will have to be imported to this country sooner or later. You ought to get someone to write a commentary on a remark which was made by Matthew Arnold nearly a hundred years ago, who said that

> the schools in Rome were the only ones on the Continent which reminded him of England. There was the same absence of system, the same powerlessness and indifference of the State, the same independence in single institutions, the same abuses, the same confusion and the same lack of co-ordination, the same extravagance and the same poverty of result. Unlike in other things, Austria, Rome and England are alike in this that their civil organisations all deny the right of mind and reason to rule human affairs. In Rome this right is sacrificed in the name of religion, in Austria in the name of loyalty, in England in the name of liberty.

B. V. Bowden
Principal

Manchester College of Science & Technology

My attention has been drawn to Mr. Noel Annan's remarks about Oriental Studies in your April number. He writes about "entrenched linguists" who are alleged to be interested only in subjects like Mandarin Chinese and not at all in the living languages of Asia. The Provost of King's should know that Mandarin is merely a slightly old-fashioned name for the current, standard language of the People's Republic of China, based on the vernacular of Peking. In Cambridge we teach it as Modern Chinese, as he can soon verify by referring to the regulations of the Oriental Studies Tripos.

E. G. Pulleyblank

Downing College, Cambridge

I think that the first time that anyone at Cambridge was taught to *speak* modern Chinese was at a course laid on in the language laboratory last summer by the Board of Extra-Mural Studies at the prompting of *London* University.

Noel Annan

"The Lion & the Ostrich"

I feel bound to express my profound admiration for your courageous July issue "Suicide of a Nation?". I am sure that many Dutchmen will share my hope that, in retrospect, your publication will be regarded as a remarkable symptom of a return to health and vigour on the part of a people which will always be dear to this nation because of its unforgettable stand in the last war.

Dr. L. De Jong

Amsterdam

"L'Administration que l'Europe nous envie...." Old formula, old glory—but the old slogan is only quoted ironically in France nowadays. True, Europe used to envy our administration in the early days of the Third Republic, but the manifold setbacks and—on closer examination—deep disorder peculiar to that administration have cured us of our vanity. And now, wafted from the other side of the Channel, comes an intoxicating breeze. There still exist in Europe people who envy our administration: the English!

The special number just published by Encounter under Arthur Koestler's editorship and devoted to the "suicidal" state of England denounces ailments which we are familiar with, and whose developments we are watching at home. Nevertheless, at a time when we are wondering how we can get on with the academic year of 1963 because of the lack of buildings, teachers, and the reckless indifference of a bureaucracy which has been encouraging the birth-rate for almost twenty years without providing either for housing or education, Encounter suggests that England ought to derive inspiration from the French system of education in order to reform her own!

At a time when peasants are barricading roads, beating up gendarmes and barracking prefects because for almost twenty years people have been spurring them on to greater productivity without providing outlets for their products, Encounter hails the young civil servants who have graduated from our centres of higher education as the

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"meritocrats" of modern times, perfectly adapted by their training and the scope of their activities ("*le Plan*") to the problems which confront them. People go so far as to envy us our National School of Administration, whose principles and organisation were quite simply copied from the British Civil Service system!

I even wonder whether some people are not delighted to see us disburdened of an ineffectual parliamentary system—and do I detect a note of regret that the British parliament has not shown sufficient symptoms of impotence to enable a change similar to that of 13th May to take place in Westminster?

Our ears are still ringing with the campaign unleashed in London newspapers by the press conference of 14th January. We were a little worried by some of the verbal excesses indulged in at the time, but no less worried to see in many quarters almost the entire responsibility for the Gaullist refusal to admit England into the Common Market laid at the door of successive British governments. Were we French really so blameless in this respect?

All this is astonishing rather than flattering. I assume that the ills denounced by ENCOUNTER and currently afflicting our British neighbours are genuinely grave—perhaps graver than those from which we ourselves are suffering at present. The fact remains, however, that our institutions, which are becoming enervated, our government and administration, which resist parliament but invariably surrender to demonstrators, and the ever-increasing disequilibrium between what ought to be mutually complementary sectors of our economy (more and more cars but no motorways, more and more nursing facilities but no hospitals, more and more children—all educated until the age of sixteen—but no schools, colleges, or teaching staff) prompt us to view a situation which ENCOUNTER regards as enviable with greater reservations than those evinced by its cross-Channel contributors.

Arthur Koestler once declared that England was suffering from a minor indisposition which he

Paris

THIS *is England's finest hour but, by gad, the ones who say it most cuttingly and say it best are the English. Never have the English so wallowed in self-abasement, employing the whole magnificent organ of language in the process. Malcolm Muggeridge, a denouncer of rare power, has uncorked a superb diatribe of self-loathing (I think you might call it that) in the current issue of* ENCOUNTER. . . . *There was more, much more, all superbly orchestrated, Mr. Muggeridge using his violins, his woodwinds, his brasses. The whole band.*

The English, for the last five years, have been turning on themselves the withering scorn they once reserved for the rest of us. Now the English seem intent on belting each other and there is no one who can indulge in that game with such deadly aim. . . .

Could anyone write "Candide" honestly today? In the present temper of the country the French couldn't and the Americans certainly wouldn't. But the British could, and, I think, they are cleansing themselves by this honesty.

JOHN CROSBY *in* N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

Manchester

ONE *of my* EEC *friends says that what Britain needs is the thing that hit the Six in the war—a traumatic shock. In the new countries of the Commonwealth they get it automatically, on Independence Day. Britain might have received it if she had succeeded in joining the Six. I see Mr. Arthur Koestler and Mr. Melvin Lasky have been jointly trying to administer a jab of ozone by means of the printed page in the current issue of* ENCOUNTER, *but a traumatic shock surely requires a stimulus of a larger kind. I do not pretend to know the answer.*

PATRICK KEATLEY *in* THE GUARDIAN

London

I DON'T *know whether to welcome or deplore the special July number of* ENCOUNTER. *Guest edited by Arthur Koestler, it is a pretty exasperated symposium surveying modern Britain under the title "Suicide of a Nation?"*

Much of the often angry and anxious and sometimes despairing criticism provides a needed jolt. . . .

These are words of patriots dismayed by our post-war inadequacies of policy, direction, and leadership. For home consumption they are timely and valuable. What may they do to our image abroad?

PETERBOROUGH *in the* DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

"OH NO, *not again!" may be the reaction of a good many people as they pick up the July number of* ENCOUNTER, *a special issue edited by Arthur Koestler and devoted to the slow decline of this isle full of noises. "Suicide of a Nation?" is the come-on title on the cover and Mr. Koestler, ever ready with a word or a phrase, has thought of labelling many of our attitudes as Struthonian (Latin "struthio"; "ostrich"). Malcolm Muggeridge writes his usual piece, a phalanx of Shankses, Shonfields, and others document just how slothful we grasshoppers are, while Henry Fairlie puts in a claim for the grasshopper as a humane beast and even suggests that he may catch up with the ant one day.*

Best phrase-maker of all, though, is Cyril Connolly. He suggests that once England has digested the Kama Sutra, "Tropic of Cancer," and the rest she may end as "a Bali in goose-flesh." I also like his account of our climate "when each season succeeds the other like a prisoner being re-arrested as he leaves gaol."

THE GUARDIAN

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The Flagellants

One would almost have preferred the English to have kept their sexual inhibitions, since in shedding them their enduring puritanism takes other and even more depressing forms. The dust-and-ashes school of writers, for example, a goodly company of whom have been assembled by Mr. Koestler in the July Encounter, *take for their masochistic theme the sloth, incompetence, amateurishness, and inability to face facts of their class-ridden fellow-countrymen. The case for the prosecution is by now well known. Our national rate of growth is inordinately low; our share of international trade falling; managers and Civil Servants are badly trained; trade unionists are conservative and not trained at all; Europe is shooting ahead and unless we wake up decline and ruin are certain. The jeremiad is also well suited to television presentation and makes splendid reading for foreigners, especially Americans. If you disagree with its diagnosis you are an ostrich (Mr. Koestler heads his introduction "The Lion and the Ostrich").*

This discouraging exercise, however, has its peculiarities. When rate of growth is discussed, France and Germany are instanced because theirs is high; the United States is left out, presumably because its rate is not all that better than ours. When Lord Altrincham criticises our "medieval" Parliament, France is kept off the stage presumably for having nearly lost hers and the good examples are found in America. We are combed for our weaknesses, they for their strengths, and one conclusion (by Mr. Michael Shanks) is that we are "a society which has embraced stagnation as a way of life."

Up to a point, self-criticism is valuable, and many of the points made in the Encounter *articles are valid. But an extravagance of dispraise can lower the spirit of a country which, though prosperous as never before, admittedly has harder work ahead. Further, it will be noticed that underlying all these articles is a root-and-branch attack on British education, on its organisation and content. "It is our out-dated educational system," Mr. Koestler concludes, "out-dated in almost every respect—11-plus, streaming, curriculum, segregation by class and sex—which perpetuates the iniquities of the past." The attack is dangerously uninformed and the remedies proposed should be closely examined. Mr. Goronwy Rees, for example, says that the industrial managers produced by our system are amateurs and not professionals. He cites history as an unsuitable study for future managers. There is certainly room for more technical men in British management, but presumably he would also prefer undergraduate business studies on American lines. On the same argument, and with the same American example, he might be expected to support university courses in journalism for future journalists. At the University of Iowa, and many other places, students may major in journalism, and will spend much of their time doing précis, inventing headlines, and even producing a campus daily newspaper. They arrive in their first newspaper office more adept than a graduate in history, but is this how journalists should be educated? Is it not better for their minds to be tested and stretched by a mental discipline and a human study like history? Should we not say the same of men entering business? (This is not to criticise post-graduate study in their vocation for men who have already entered business or industry.)*

It is true that our educational base has been too narrow. We are expanding it rapidly, and our denigrators do not allow enough for the remarkable development of the technical colleges or the more recent attention to apprentice training. But the suggestion that British education in one way and another does not compare with that abroad springs only from ignorance. It covers more ground, in a shorter time, than any other in the world. We should certainly take more time. We might help ourselves more by laying on four-year courses for present university numbers than by three-year courses for greater numbers. But that is impossible in a society so uninstructed as to regard quantity of graduates as more important than quality. Our present system discovers sooner or later every boy or girl possessing real talent and produces a vast amount of academic dross as well (let alone those failed during their courses). The reform of higher education, as generally advocated, means the production of more dross at great public expense. Those who like spending their taxes that way are welcome to it.

There is, of course, in this issue of what we must take to be our most intellectual magazine (if it is really our own) a series of sharp attacks on the public schools. Some of the thoughts printed raise the eye-brows. We are told by one writer that we "must become more adventurous, more inventive and appreciative of invention, more in touch with the world as it is. These are the qualities which the public schools discourage and disparage." And again, in another article, the public school system "has incontestable virtues, but they belong to the past. The types it produces are no longer at home, no longer 'with it' in the contemporary world." The editor seems to have failed to notice that the public schools are sufficiently "with it" to have produced 11 out of his 16 prophets of woe, while Oxford and Cambridge ("fairy lands in the heart of modern Britain," according to a quote from Mr. Anthony Sampson) actually scored 14. Ah well, good for a laugh.

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

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diagnosed and defined as *"French flu...."* One gains the impression that, this time, he has not escaped infection himself.

JEAN BLOCH-MICHEL

Paris

YOUR SPECIAL NUMBER of ENCOUNTER, the prevailing quality of which dissipates much of the gloom its contents engender (at least on the white-collar front), exemplifies one important aspect of English life—masochism—and makes several sidelong references to another—a high regard for kindness or "decency."

The masochistic streak in our make-up may readily be discerned (together with a little of the decency) by any visitor who watches a citizen forgo his place in a London bus rather than *appear* to step in front of another citizen who is, in fact, waiting in the queue for a different bus. Nor is it an exclusively post-war phenomenon. When we have said of someone "He met his Waterloo," we have been oddly identifying ourselves with the defeated Napoleon rather than with our victorious countryman, Wellington. One recalls, too, the words of A. F. Pollard in his *Short History of the Great War* (1920):

> "It is merely a modest foible of the people, which has hardly lost a war for nearly four hundred years, to ascribe its escape to fortune, and to envy the prescience and the science which have lightened the path of its enemies to destruction."

That kindness muffles efficiency cannot be denied. Private decency, too, often looks like laziness. Of course it is infuriating to find café chairs piled on the tables just when we want to eat; and this nuisance can be avoided when every efficient café-owner and every shift-working waiter is willing to sell the customer what he wants, when he wants it—as, for instance, in New York. We, the consumers, would benefit. But is it not a merit of our "decent" society to recognise that they, too, the café people, are consumers, entitled to prefer more leisure to more money if they so desire? Their lives may conceivably be less rich for lack of the gadgets bought by more money from more hard work; yet what on earth is the value of liberty if it does not include the liberty to deny oneself one advantage in order to enjoy another? What will be the point of upward graphs in economy and education if we are all either too exhausted or too irritable to garner the fruits into human baskets? To laud hard work or even education for their own sake only (and usually on behalf of other people, since we the writers are always hard-working and well-educated enough) is to turn the flight from reason into a national stampede. There is surely something in the distinction made in Italy, where a man may be adjudged *ben' instruito* and *mal' educato* at the same time.

"If each man swept before his door, the village would be clean." But I prefer, of course, like most of your contributors, to point to other doors. Your own, for instance. It was mildly vulgar to list your contributors on the cover by their surnames only, as if they were supermen or French film-stars (with the exception of "Elizabeth Young"—who might, after all, have been Michael). More serious was the lapse of appending to the articles of Messrs. Fairlie and Muggeridge an editorial note pointing out that although free to express themselves, these gentlemen were out of step with the rest and must therefore be freaks.

S. GORLEY PUTT

Harkness House,
London

Gloom is Justified

THE CURRENT NUMBER *of* ENCOUNTER *makes for very depressing reading. This is the number in which a small galaxy of thinkers and public men muster under the banner of Arthur Koestler to do some highly effective sniping against some of the more obvious malaises of English society in general and of its industrial sector in particular.*

To take one example, Mr. Austen Albu, M.P., has some brutal things to say about the amateur tradition in English management. A bit hysterical, you may think? Then read Donald Hutchings' article in the current issue of the Universities Quarterly, *which makes it as plain as plain that university entrants are still thinking in terms of gentlemen and players—the gentlemen being the pure scientists, and the players, heaven help them, being the ones who are forced by their inferior ability to apply their knowledge in trade.*

What makes us even more depressed, however is the bouncy way in which the Times Educational Supplement *has reacted to the* ENCOUNTER *symposium. In a characteristic posture, the* Supplement *complains that people keep on asking for quantity in higher education when they ought to be asking for quality, and says: "The reform of higher education, as generally advocated, means the production of more dross at great public expense."*

If we all listen to the Supplement, *the next* ENCOUNTER *symposium will be even more depressing than the last.* THE TEACHER

EVERY TIME I return to England from abroad—as, like M.M., I somehow usually do—Mr. Muggeridge seems to be "a little more run-down, a little dingier . . . a little more fatuous" than when I went away. I single him out only because his piece in your otherwise most stimulating issue seems to be the silliest and the most easy to resist. Mr. Muggeridge is clearly a sensitive man of great intelligence and talent, yet he seems bent upon proving that throughout what must have been an enviably interesting life he has never enjoyed an experience or an event nor met a person he does not dislike or despise. Either this is true—in which case it is a problem between himself and his doctor—or it is false, in which case why waste our time and his in such tedious self-parody?

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The other members of your team must be taken far more seriously. I do not quarrel with their diagnosis of our national ills, as ably summarised by the Editor (how I wish that he, Sir, had written the whole issue) nor with most of their strictures upon those of us who try to design, make or sell our national artefacts. No doubt we shall bend even more briskly to our tasks as a result. I do not ask that they should swallow their own prescription and try to increase their productivity. It is difficult indeed to see how they could—so often do we meet them on the printed page. I do not particularly resent the fact—or do I?—that most of your authors seem to have gone straight from University into the oracular profession.

But if we are to listen to the experts we are at least entitled to examine their credentials. My question is this—and I hope it is not a silly one. Most of us would agree that most of our national troubles spring from a national attitude of mind. This is the field in which priests and philosophers, prophets and self-appointed gadflies of all kinds are legitimately expected to operate. I am all for such "messengers of discontent". How, without them, can we ever be improved? Yet it is just the intellectual qualities, the standards of perception and diagnostic skill of these essential figures vis-à-vis those of their European counterparts which seem to be left unexamined in your special issue. How in fact do we in England stand in the Jeremiad stakes? How are we, as the American owls are reported to say, "wise-wise?" Could ENCOUNTER perhaps not investigate this problem?

Let us hope the answer is encouraging. If our prophets and gadflies prove to be as incompetent, pin-headed, and sheeplike as seem to be our rulers, our professionals, and our manufacturers, then we are doomed indeed.

HUGH CASSON

London.

I READ your July number with mixed feelings. It is all pretty true. Indeed there is hardly an argument in it that I myself have not used. The essays are written by people I know and admire and I do not think I have ever read a more brilliant special number.

THERE WAS *a moment in one of Danny Kaye's songs when he used to cry in the voice of one who had supped sick of pleasure, "The same old beautiful chorus girls." Reading the special July issue of* ENCOUNTER *on the theme of "Suicide of a Nation?" leads to an almost irresistible desire to echo the phrase; for here, lined up by no less a ballet master than Arthur Koestler, is that well-known, glittering, though mercifully not always co-ordinated troupe—the fashionable critics of British society, working out one more set of variations on the familiar routines.*

Yet no: they are not chorus girls but a Greek chorus crying woe. Their theme is death and decay: the result should make those critics who felt the New Society *survey results to be depressing look back on them now as something almost euphoric. (Incidentally,* ENCOUNTER *includes a generous discussion of our survey.)*

ADMITTEDLY THERE *is one exception to the woemongers in Henry Fairlie. He gaily tries to trip up the rest of the chorus by arguing that those who write "State of England pieces" are like nothing so much as Tigger in* The House at Pooh Corner *making worraworraworraworra-worra noises as he wraps himself up in the table-cloth. But the rest are pretty much of one mind, though only Mr. Muggeridge seems to regard the situation as totally irredeemable. Some indeed, notably John Cole and Michael Shanks, have an obvious grasp of their subject and a vigour which actually suggests that things could be put right.*

Alas, the weakest part of the operation is the group of articles which come under the heading "Towards a New Society?" It opens with a piece of charmingly inconsequent reminiscence by Cyril Connolly, goes on with an angry growl from a sick-bed by Marcus Cunliffe, continues with a plea for sexual freedom by Alan McGlashan, and winds up on a despairing note from John Vaizey. It is not surprising that Mr. Koestler only just seems able to manage a brave smile (and a plea for educational reform) as he sweeps away the débris.

Are we being unfair about all this? The answer is that ENCOUNTER *is inevitably judged by its own high standard. And this issue is worth discussing because it presents a picture of British intellectual life to-day. (More, perhaps, than of British life as a whole.) If this picture is gloomy it is worth asking why.*

Obviously there are all sorts of things about which critics of society are very properly angry; but the sickness of our intellectuals seems to be born of frustration with themselves and their situation. This in turn may be because Britain is still reluctant to acknowledge that the intellectual is in himself useful: we tend to keep our respect for those who "do something about it." But it is hard to avoid the fact that the intellectuals' criticism of society is often marked by the amateurishness which they so deplore in other fields of life. Of this, the present issue of ENCOUNTER *is a very good example, in that it parades a wealth of clever people saying clever things, but almost none of those insights that might come from a more highly developed and professional study of society. Who knows, such studies might reveal that it is not the British as a whole but only the pundits who feel the death wish so strongly?* NEW SOCIETY

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And yet the total picture it gives of British society seems to me to be false. Sometimes this is due to rhetorical overstatement. Mr. Albu says: "The brightest young Arts men from Oxford or Cambridge prefer to become bankers or stockbrokers . . . rather than go into industry." Is this a fact and if so can it be verified? Or is it simply Mr. Albu's impression? Sometimes it is due to *under*statement. Mr. Albu rightly complains of the length of time it took to establish a number of Colleges of Technology of university rank after their need had been authoritatively recognised. But that is all he tells us. What are the CATS doing? Why does Mr. Albu not tell us? I should have thought they were helping quite substantially to change the climate he and I deplore. Mr. Albu also tells us that "a number of universities have now started post-graduate courses in industrial management of a more sophisticated kind. . . ." But he makes no attempt to evaluate them.

Eventually he comes to the large gift which British industry made to the public schools to equip themselves with science laboratories. Now this could have been used to show that here was an important and desirable change in the outlook of the public schools. But Mr. Albu observes it only to blame industry for perpetuating the class divisions in British education.

I WAS DISMAYED by Mr. John Vaizey's article—all the more since I share his views about education and envy his rare combination of verve and scholarship. Mr. Vaizey says: "In 20 years a lot has been done . . . the differences between the grammar school child and the 'secondary modern' child are being eroded. There has been an increase in technical education and in science teaching." Why did Mr. Vaizey not give the figures which he had lying on his desk? I am sure they are impressive.

Throughout the whole number achievements are rather lightly dismissed and shortcomings are heavily emphasised. I myself believe that a hopeful revolution is going on in education and in attitudes towards class; and that ideas in industry and the trade union movement are changing more radically and more swiftly than any of your contributors admit. Of course there is a case for not recognising the amount of progress that is being made. Those of us who want to drive forward faster are afraid that unless we keep up the pressure there will be a danger of slowing down. But if we act like this, we are acting as propagandists, not as serious students of society.

As a picture of the changing British nation to-day your special number is unbalanced. I hope that your British readers will find it stimulates their desire to speed up the change and that your readers abroad will run to the nearest British Council office for reassurance that Britain is not in such a desperate state.

JOHN BEAVAN

London

THE CONTRIBUTORS to your special July number, "Suicide of a Nation?," themselves exhibit all the faults they attack in others. Goronwy Rees writes on the "Cult of Incompetence," Austen Albu complains of a "Taboo on Expertise," and several contributors deplore the role of Oxbridge in perpetuating a stagnant amateurism. Among the writers in your "enquiry into the state of Britain to-day," John Vaizey is the only professional social scientist: a taboo on expertise. Ten of your sixteen contributors are Oxford men: the familiar Oxbridge stranglehold.

Despite all the expressed impatience with irrelevant traditions, this ENCOUNTER has strong overtones of Betjeman. Your authors lovingly record how their thoughts come to them on railway stations; Andrew Shonfield tells us about St. Pancras, while Henry Fairlie prefers Paddington for his reveries. Fairlie, incidentally, outdoes himself by arguing with the editorial question—like a clever schoolboy baiting the examiner. Several of your writers quite shamelessly serve up shortened versions of their recent pop paperbacks. Personally I prefer to take my Pelicans undiluted. Having read ENCOUNTER for ten years, I am sad to witness this suicide of a magazine.

JEREMY TUNSTALL

Islington

THE *recently issued special number of* ENCOUNTER *that has been organised by Arthur Koestler to assess the condition of contemporary England is more depressing than anything I have read for years, not because of the sorry state of affairs which the contributors allege, but because of their own state of mind. Of them all, only Henry Fairlie, undeterred by Koestler's displeasure, points out that England is still, perhaps, the easiest of all countries to live in. For the rest we have such an exhibition of nagging and wailing as would make one think that the plague was once more upon us. An important distinction in attitudes is somewhere made by a female character of Evelyn Waugh's, who remarks that for some people the day is ruined if one little thing goes wrong, whereas for herself she will count the day made if one little thing goes right. Constitutionally pessimistic and sceptical, I am of the latter persuasion, and so I find it hard to believe that Koestler and so many other intelligent writers can seriously envisage for this country the state of streamlined perfection which they appear to advocate. Quite apart from anything else, their remedies for our shortcomings are so unamiable, so aggressive, so philistine: interference with this and investigation of that, more and more bossing about by technocrats—does no one these days remember the fable of King Log and King Stork?*

SIMON RAVEN *in* THE SPECTATOR

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I AM GRATEFUL to Michael Shanks for his provocative analogy between the Lele in the Kasai and England in Western Europe. Lele culture certainly —and Michael Shanks may well be right in suggesting ours too in recent years—emphasises social objectives—provision for the elderly, reduction of social tensions, fair distribution of wealth and powers, etc.—in preference to economic objectives.

By doing so they make the attainment of their ultimate social objectives more difficult. The Lele themselves, who often tend to be cynical, disappointed, anxious and denigratory would, I think, identify with the authors of this issue of ENCOUNTER even more strongly than with the England it seeks to describe.

The Lele's more successful neighbours, the Bushong whom Professor Vansina has studied, tend to be naively wealth-seeking and brutally competitive. The introspective mood of this issue of ENCOUNTER would, I suspect, be quite unintelligible to them. I suspect too that neither Michael Shanks nor most of your other contributors would find that they had many social values in common with them. The paradox, and one of the themes I tried to bring out in my book, is that the values which we associate with mature civilisation—I think rightly, precisely because they are largely non-materialistic and altruistic—can sometimes undermine the material basis of further social advance.

MARY DOUGLAS

Highgate, London

Insularity

THE PENULTIMATE PARAGRAPH of Mr. H. V. Hodson's letter [ENCOUNTER, April] puzzled me. Rather odd, isn't it, to cast "anti-patriotism and insularity" as the same disease afflicting Britain?

> *This fortress built . . .*
> *against . . . the hand of War . . .*
> *This precious stone set in the silver sea.*

Perhaps Shakespeare had the disease of the Left to which Mr. Hodson refers—which makes it chronic over more generations than he seemed to imply. And, after all, what's unpatriotic about being scared that foreign politicians will make such a mess of things that this island will be blown to kingdom *come?*

Furthermore, as I understand it, the Right has always been thought of as insular in this country —or are all the history books wrong about who stood for Free Trade? The idea, too, of International Socialism must be insular as well as unpatriotic.

Little wonder that the chronic disease of the Right has always been a shortage of intellectuals; grey matter and blue convictions can hardly subsist in one cranium.

BERNARD LEVY

London

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The Doctor who wrote this letter has given us special permission to publish it.

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CONTRAST

The Television Quarterly

The Television Festival Number

The Autumn issue of CONTRAST is on sale now at your newsagent. It is a Television Festival number and includes a special reference section in the form of a directory of data on the television services operating throughout the world, together with a selected reading list of books, pamphlets and articles on a wide range of television subjects, technical and aesthetic.

This list was compiled by John Maddison, author of "What is a Television Film" which is also published in this issue and which is a theme paper for an international conference to take place during the Edinburgh Festival in late August.

The next issue will also include an article on German television by Robert Vas, and reports from Italy, France, Denmark, America, Australia and Japan. Peter Jenkins writes on the presentation of politics on Television in this country and Charles Osborne investigates the cult of the pop singer.

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